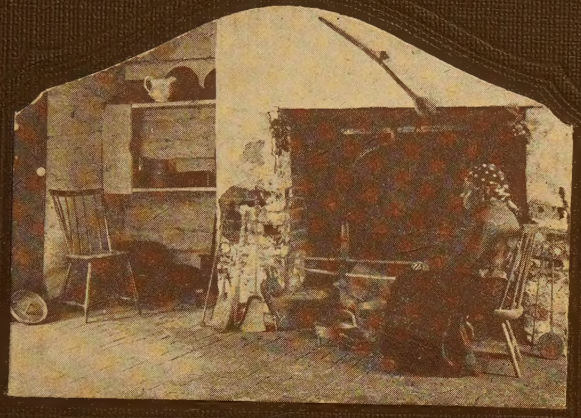
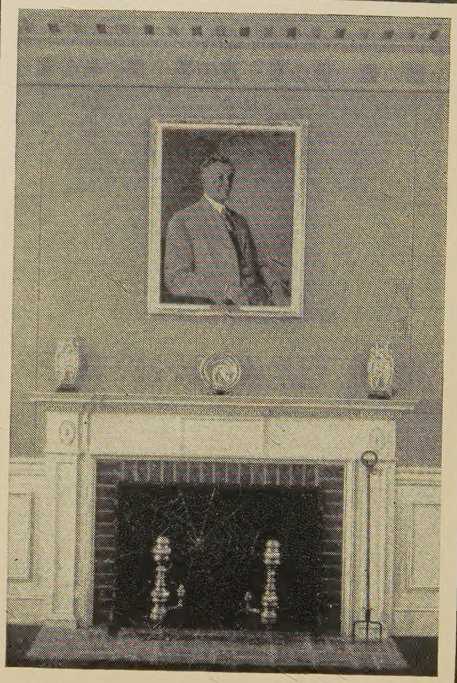


In TIDEWATER VIRGINIA



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In TIDEWATER VIRGINIA

By

DORA CHINN JETT

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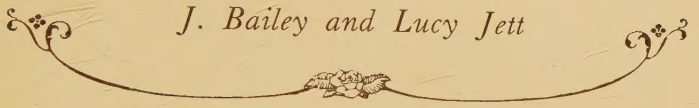
To the
Memory of my Gentle Parents
J. Bailey and Lucy Jett



FOREWORD

THIS is the simple story of the old homes on the Rappahannock River. I would like to include in the recital the achievements of those who lived therein. But to give that meritorious inclusion its due meed of worthy praise requires the pen of a real historian. And oftentimes, though the moving power behind that little instrument may be a deep student of history, inaccuracies, with subtle aggressiveness, have been known to creep in! And so I shall tell you more particularly of something of the environment of these people, of their haunts and homes as they appear today.

I shall tell you of that which I have either seen for myself, or of what I have gleaned from authentic sources.

After all, the roof which shelters a man, the big spreading trees planted by his hand, the garden and acres surrounding,—all that which lives materially after he is no more,—are an inseparable part of him, who at a distant bygone day planned it all.

I shall not dwell on the blackened walls of "Cleve," nor upon that other "Mannsfield" of

yesterday, nor upon those crumbling rocks, once the foundation for beautiful Colonial "Roscobel," nor upon that proud old home, "Oakenbrow," still smoking on its "sightly location." Nor shall I dwell upon others in the long list, which live in memory only.

The pioneer Rappahannock planter built his home not only for today and tomorrow, but for the day after tomorrow, and for the great, great, grandchildren of his children. Many of these sturdy mansions have been victims of calamitous misfortune, and are no more. Others still feel the thrill of life,—in a greater or less degree,—and some of these we will consider.

"My consayte is such:" says an old writer, "I had rather not to builde a mansyon or a house, than to builde one without a good prospect in it, to it, and from it." Fiske does not tell us the author of this assertion, but to my ear there is the tang of the Rappahannock country, which suggests a Lewis, a Carter, a Tayloe, a Beverley, a Fitzhugh, a Garnett, a Dangerfield, or a Wormeley, and their homes today, many of them still lovely, justify the impression.

I trust that the assemblage of this group, with the many good "prospects" to, and from, and in each of the mansions mentioned may entertain and please those interested in this section.

DORA JETT.

October, 1924.

CONTENTS

	PAGE		PAGE
Beauclaire	40	La Vûe	39
Belle Grove	89	Leedstown	140
Belleville	136	Mannsfield Hall	63
Belmont	45	Menokin	144
Belvidere Farm	69	Moss Neck	80
Blandfield	115	Mount Airy	129
Brompton	37	Naylors Hole	137
Brooke's Bank	103	Oakenbrow	91
Camden	96	Pine Grove	61
Carlton Heights	49	Port Conway	87
Chatham	53	Port Royal	87
Cleveland	92	Prospect Hill	73
Elmwood	109	River, The	15
Epping Forest	147	Rokeby	94
Fall Hill	21	Rosegill	152
Falmouth	42	Sabine Hall	133
Fredericksburg	27	Saint Julien	67
Gay Mont	83	Santee	77
Glencairne	52	Scott's Hill	51
Hayfield	71	Smithfield	63
Hewick	155	Snowden	24
Hopyard, The	95	Snowdon	60
Island, The	18	Tappahannock	122
Kenmore	33	Traveller's Rest	58
Kinlock	98	Westmoreland	139

ILLUSTRATIONS

In Mary Washington's Kitchen, Fredericksburg, Va. ..... Cover

	PAGE		PAGE
The Rappahannock	14	Santee	78
The Island	19	Moss Neck	81
Fall Hill	23	At Gay Mont	85
At Snowden	25	At Port Royal	88
Mary Washington House	28	Cleveland	94
Mortimer Home	30	Camden	97
Hazel Run	31	Kinlock	101
Kenmore Interior	35	Vauter's Church	105
Brompton	38	Elmwood	111
Falmouth	43	Blandfield	119
Belmont	47	At Tappahannock	125
From Carlton Heights	50	Mount Airy	131
At Chatham	55	Sabine Hall	135
Traveller's Rest	59	In Westmoreland County	138
Hayfield	71	Coach House	149
Prospect Hill	75	Rosegill	153

INTRODUCTION

IT may be the simple square Georgian or Queen Anne type of architecture—the old Rappahannock home,—or it may have its sides planked by commodious wings, and its portico ornamented with classic Ionic, Doric, or Tuscan columns.

It may or it may not have the seclusion of its premises insured by strong brick walls, or the privacy of its indoors secured by heavy window shutters.

Its garden may be more or less sweet-scented and riotously colored with blossoms, and lovely with the grace of ivy and woodbine.

But whatever the condition, the sunshine is nowhere brighter, the summer winds and rains are nowhere sweeter, and the atmosphere, with all its literal and figurative significance, nowhere contributes more to health and happiness.

Peep into yonder dining-room on a chill October day. "Aunt Louisa," with a justifiable consciousness of her efficiency and importance, has just sounded the call to breakfast. The cheery

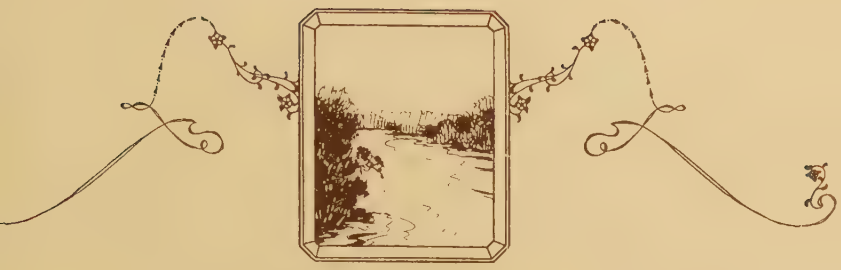
blaze beneath the hand-carved mantel flickers its comfort-laden light on portrait and panel. The sun, still low in the east, illumines the old table with its becoming mats, and its odd and pleasing pieces of household plate. Under the cover of those age-old blue dishes, now steaming with appetizing fragrance, the typical menu is such as to satisfy any follower of Epicurus. Here are biscuits and batter-bread, yellow with new-laid eggs, coffee, partridges and sora broiled in fresh-churned butter, and old Virginia ham baked to challenge a rival!

Many of these old homes repeat, in part, the social and economic features of the picturesque life of the old South. Their occupants, in several cases lineal descendants of the original owner, tenaciously cling to such individualities of old plantation life, as agreeably conform to the changes which the passage of time necessarily imposes,—the labor question in most instances being responsible for the major differences.

Perhaps the Rappahannock region embraces as much of this happy, composite life as any other equal area.

In TIDEWATER VIRGINIA

The Rappahannock



Chapter I.

THE RIVER

"In the discovery of this river some call Rapahanock, we were kindly entertained by the people of Moraughtacund."

—Captain John Smith.

. . .

RAPPAHANNOCK! there is a certain poetic quality in the assembled syllables, apart from the significance of the word, something picturesque, and suggestive of wigwams, wampum, mulberry, and locust trees! also tomahawks, arrowheads, and pow-wows! Too few of us are familiar with the exquisite poetry of nature, the simple, unaffected but impressive metaphors, and the euphonious combinations contained in our aboriginal languages. No one can deny the music in the Mohawk coinage *Oneota,* people who sprung from a rock, or the Ojibway, *Mississippi,* great river, or the Dakotah *Minnehaha,* laughing water, or *Shenandoah,* daughter of the stars, or *Potomac,* the river of swans, or *Appomattox,* the tobacco plant coun-

try, or *Tacoma,* near to heaven, and numberless other words, all fraught with significance and harmony.

The stream which flows between the Potomac and James, under the shining sun and stars of Dixieland, had in the long gone days of the powerful Powhatan confederacy, and will ever have, a feature which evidently impressed the peoples of that great alliance,—the rapid rise and quickly following ebb of its tide. The dwellers along its banks were *Rapahanocks,* or *people of the alternating stream.*

Bathed in the sunlight which floods the eastern slope of the Blue Ridge Mountains, in the lush meadow lands of what is now Rappahannock County, a sparkling little mountain stream hastens with its tinkling chatter. Another little stream bubbles and eddies over its pebbly basin, and from the north, and from the south, the silvery waters of many still smaller streamlets, add their small but determining volume, and the Rappahannock River has its birth.

This unassuming little stream pursues its uninterrupted southeasterly course through an agricultural section of Piedmont Virginia. Now it laves the shores of the fertile apple country.

Farther on it divides a heavily timbered region from a productive farming center.

When about fifty miles from its source, it sprawls over the big dam of the Power Company. Then its waters battle with those mon-

strous boulders which lift their mossy sides above the river's level,—a peculiarity of this region.

Nature, that successful artificer in every attempt, has created here a wild, rugged, and picturesque spot, the Falls of the Rappahannock; a comely field of conflict, without hostility, without bloodshed. The channel of the river the field, the water and rocks the contestants, the long enduring and still undecided question for the right of way, the principle. The whispering pines, and the soft, sibilant sound of wind in cedar and locust trees on the wooded shore, the spur from an entertained audience.

Chapter II.

THE ISLAND

"Above the town [Fredericksburg] on the Stafford side is an island, where, it is said, Governor Spotswood proposed to realize a Utopia."

—Moncure D. Conway.

. . .

AND the river, noisy with its triumphant murmur, rushes madly on, regardless that the rocks, too, are victors, unconscious of the grandeur created by these disturbing elements, and indifferent to the fact that the charming little island which here presents another obstacle is part of that enormous grant of land ". . . conveyed and made over to Thomas, Lord Culpeper, by letters patent . . . of King Charles the second, of ever-blessed memory . . . in the 21st year of his reign, A. D. 1677 . . . confirmed by King James the 2nd, and . . . surveyed the 16th day of April, 1674, by the hand of Major George Morris. . . ." In 1678 Mr. Thomas Vickars, clerk of Gloucester County, became the

patentee to lands which included the island. It was then known as Vicary Island. Bearing this name through several changes of ownership,—Martha Vicars Todd, Reverend John Dixon, and Dr. Charles Mortimer,—it was purchased by William Winchester, and "Winchester's Island and Mill" was a well-known spot in this locality. Since that long-ago day the families of Spotswood Welford, John England, John Beck, Charles E. Hunter, and Ernest Wyne have occupied this tranquil little spot. "The Island" is today the country home of Mr. and Mrs. James E. Emory and family, and an unique and picturesque feature of their very pleasing residence is the foundation of huge, roughly hewn stones upon which the frame building rests, which tradition, with every proof of accuracy, asserts, was part of the old mill of William Winchester.

The Island

"The corner hollow gum standing amongst many stones against the upper end of the island," and "the red, white and Spanish oaks standing primitively . . ." as thus described in the ancient and interesting deed, all have disappeared many scores of years since. But the tall sycamores, black walnut, cedar and locust trees, with banks of honeysuckle, wild rose, and sweet grapevine stand out in attractive relief today, while the hazy mist of years gone by forms an alluring background.

This is the spot so intimately associated and so well suited to the daring of that picturesque band, the Rappahannock Indians, and that stalwart product of Yorkshire, England, Francis Thornton I., whose encounters with the Indians, and with the other wild life of which this region was the habitat, is the foundation for many thrilling stories and legends. His "punch bowl," hewn out of solid rock, with the initials, *F. T.*, and the date, *1720,* still legible, is a near-by reminder.

Chapter III.

FALLS PLANTATION AND FALL HILL

"God does not send us strange flowers every year.
When the spring winds blow o'er the pleasant places,
The same dear things lift up the same fair faces;"

—Adeline D. T. Whitney.

. . .

A CHARMING bit of seventeenth-century architecture with its hip roof and dormer windows stands midway between Fredericksburg and Falmouth today, half-hidden by the hillsides which still bear the impress of wonderful terraces stepping down to the river's edge, and belonging to a period long since gone.

This is all that now remains of the immense Falls Plantation of Francis Thornton I. It was also the old home of Roger Gregory, the jolly squire, whose very name suggested jollity and good times generally. His second wife was Mildred Washington, aunt and god-mother of

George Washington, and they were the parents of that trio of Gregory girls, whom delineators love to dress in big cloaks and quaint poke bonnets on the road from their highland home at the Falls Plantation to see "Aunt Mary" in town, and to hear the latest achievements of their cousin George.

The name Thornton must have exerted some magnetic influence over the hearts of these captivating Gregory girls, for Frances gave her heart and hand to Colonel Francis Thornton, of the Fall Hill estate; Mildred became the wife of Colonel John Thornton, and Elizabeth married Reuben Thornton.

The tiny "God's Acre" at the old Falls Plantation is still well protected by a stout brick wall. Among other interesting epitaphs there is one of Mildred Washington, infant daughter of Colonel Charles Washington and Mildred Thornton Washington. Lineal descendants of Colonel Francis Thornton and Frances Gregory Thornton still own and occupy the old ancestral home, Fall Hill, not far away, Mrs. Bessie Forbes Robinson, wife of Fred H. Robinson, and their children.

Situated on the summit of a picturesque slope in Spotsylvania County, about two miles from Fredericksburg, Fall Hill commands an extended and enchanting view of the shimmering waters of the Rappahannock River, and the hills and

dales of the valley, with its luxuriant fields of grain, and its genial apple orchards.

When spring is here, in merry mood the yellow sunbeams bathe the pleasant places, and in the deep shadows there is the gold again, for dotting all the hillslope, on the north and south and east and west, is the gold of the daffodils, jonquils and narcissi. Rays of springtime glory everywhere!

The substantial brick building facing the south is the Georgian type of mansion, and was built in 1738. Its period white panelling, mantels, stairways and other finishings attest not only its age, but the taste and skill of him who planned and executed the workmanship.

Fall Hill

Chapter IV.

SNOWDEN

"The seats known as Chatham, Snowden, and Fall Hill, near Fredericksburg, have changed owners frequently since 1865. They have been kept up and improved. . . ."

—Robert Reid Howison.

. . .

ON the same ridge of hills, separated by a mile's length of rolling country, is beautiful Snowden, now the country seat of Mr. Frank C. Baldwin. This is the old home built in 1807 by Yeamans Smith, whose wife, Anne Osborne Marye, was daughter of that grand old Huguenot, Reverend James Marye, Jr., who served for many years, with loyalty and zeal, the people of old St. George's Church, Fredericksburg. Lineal descendants still occupy seats in the Episcopal churches of the city.

From the white-pillared portico of the substantial brick building with its wealth of English ivy and wistaria, through the foliage of those magnificent shade trees which dot the extensive east lawn, may be seen a productive and pleasing sec-

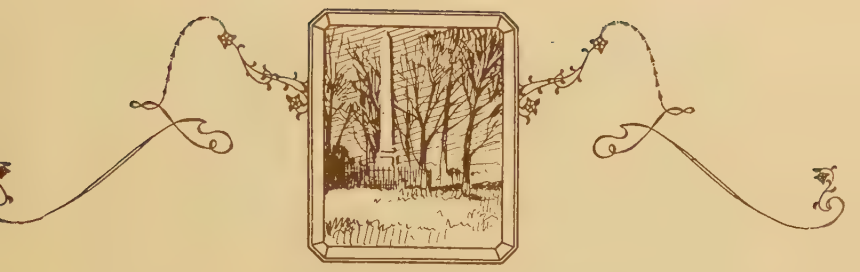
tion of the verdant Rappahannock Valley. The attractive flower garden on the west, in which peonies, hollyhocks, crepe myrtle and many gay perennials vie with each other in glowing color and beauty, all combine to give to Snowden a rare charm. But is not the aesthetic alone that appeals to the visitor at Snowden. Its share in the soul-stirring times of the War Between the States is responsible, in part, for the magnetism which attaches to the grand old home. From the past is brought back memories of an urgent conference of military men here in the old parlor,—then the home of Mr. J. L. Stansbury.

It is November 20, 1862. A driving rain is doing its most successful bit to promote the unhappiness and unrest of the loyal people of the old town.

At Snowden

Some of its officials, among them the Mayor, Montgomery Slaughter, William A. Little, Douglas H. Gordon, and others, are in consultation with the beloved Confederate Commander-in-Chief, as to the impending danger from the meeting of the two great armies. General Lee, grave and serious, kind and considerate, is too genuine to conceal his apprehension for the safety of the old town and its good people. "Then General Lee," said Mayor Slaughter, "I understand the people of the town must fear the worst." "Yes," sadly replied the General, "they must fear the worst." At this point a figure who had been sitting in the conference wrapped in his military great-coat streaming with rain, arose, and in a deep voice throws an evanescent gleam of sunshine over the solemn occasion when he adds, "But let them hope for the best." This is General Longstreet.

A moment passes, and the great hero of the Southland descends the stone steps to mount Traveller at the doorway.



Chapter V.

FREDERICKSBURG

"Betty and party passed safely through the lines, and arrived in Fredericksburg last week. I have just returned from the sweet old Burg."

—Matthew Fontaine Maury.

. . .

A WEE bit of a drive to the south lands one in the center of that section of the Rappahannock Valley where the echoes of the past are laden with the absorbing story of famous personages, the impress of whose achievements are still reaching to the farther shores of this vast country, where in charming proportions is blended the progressive and interesting activities of today. This is Fredericksburg, — "Leaseland" before Frederic, Prince of Wales, was honored in the naming. Look backward through the time-honored years, and here are the settlers under the flag of St. George. Here is being trained the strong right arm of a nation's fight for freedom. Here live men and women of gentle birth and

Mary Washington House

gracious breed under the Stars and Stripes. Now they live in the agonizing days of the Stars and Bars. Again they live their peaceful lives under America's united colors. But in 1914 the dense smoke of a mighty conflagration throws its pall over all of Europe, and three years later it penetrates the remote corners of America, and this old town feels its calamitous and depressing effects.

The atmosphere clears again, and today is the day of well-merited peace and prosperity, and every sign promises a continuation of this cheerful condition.

Through the tall trees with their garlands of ivy, through the microphylla rose bushes redolent with their snowy blossoms, through the brilliant bunches of the vigorus crepe myrtle, through the avenues of stately cedars, silhouetted against a rosy southern sky, and with the gray mist of many years beyond, there arise the individual forms of many whose names are contemporaneous with the struggle of an infant nation for liberty, and with the successful development and growth of that nation.

Close to the pungent boxwood,—which grows today in such rare luxuriance at the honored home of Mary, the mother of Washington,—stands Lafayette in close conversation with that venerated mother. See! they enter the house by the rear door. She mixes for him an iced mint julep, and Patsy, her ebony maid, serves the great man

with a slice of Madam Washington's famous gingerbread. On the grassy sward of the Sentry Box stands Hugh Mercer, afterwards the brave general, a martyr at Princeton for freedom's cause. Beside the cheery, flickering flame which animates the old hearth in the tap room at the Rising Sun Tavern, stands the stalwart form of Lord Fairfax, George Washington, George Weedon, John Paul Jones, John Marshall, and later John Randolph, of Roanoke, and many other noted men.

Dr. Charles Mortimer, first Mayor of the city, and loved and trusted physician of Mary Ball Washington, sits on the river portico of his handsome residence on lower Main Street. General John Minor, of Hazel Hill, and Thomas Reade Rootes, the noted attorney, of Federal Hill, are

Mortimer Home

both enjoying the charms of their respective homes. James Monroe, at his desk in his law office on Charles Street, is busy unravelling some of the problems which confront an active and ambitious young attorney. After many years, Commodore Matthew Fontaine Maury stands under the dappled shade of that beautiful black walnut which ornaments the north lawn of a striking Colonial residence on the west side of Main Street. These are the trying days of '61, and he is visiting his much-loved family. He has written thus to his kinsman, John Minor: "Bless your heart, dear John, for offering us shelter in these troublous times. . . ."

Across the Rappahannock, on a Stafford hill-top, is seen the tall form of George Washington

Hazel Run

and his stately bride, and Edward Everett, Abraham Lincoln, Clara Barton, and Robert E. Lee. Each in his turn alights from a coach and four which stops at the head of the stone steps at Chatham.

What memories are awakened as one enters the churchly portals of old St. Georges! the place of worship of the Washingtons, Lewises, Downmans, Carmichaels, Thorntons, Chews, Pages, and many other familiar names. What changes have been wrought since the first structure on the site in 1732! St. Georges today is stately and beautiful, with its lofty spire, its impressive proportions, its atmosphere, and its every window an imposing memorial to some saint who sleeps not far away.

The church-yard adjacent, and the old Masonic Cemetery a block away, hold much of interest in both names and inscriptions.

Chapter VI.

KENMORE

"The preservation of the ancestral dwellings of America is of real importance to the conservation of American patriotism. Among the houses still standing, Kenmore is certainly one of the most beautiful. . . ."

—HENRY VAN DYKE.

. . .

ON Washington Avenue, in the west part of Fredericksburg, an iron railing encloses a spot so magnetic that the step of the most unobservant passer is arrested thereby. Big iron gates are swung invitingly open, and on each of the solid granite gate-posts, in letters of iron, is a word which, to those familiar with its story, immediately suggests the stirring days of the American Revolution, and the influential patriot, Colonel Fielding Lewis, and his consort, Betty Washington Lewis. The heavy iron letters spell "Kenmore."

Beyond those stately lindens and umbrageous holly trees the substantial old brick mansion

stands in the center of the east line of the old garden, and because of the quality of material with which it was constructed, and the careful maintenance by its past and present owners, it carries its one hundred and seventy years with the dignity and charm of becoming old age.

The mansion,—a pure Georgian type,—was built about 1752 by Colonel Lewis. It is said that, in order to overcome some of the difficulties in gaining the heart and hand of the reluctant Miss Betty, Colonel Lewis promised that he would build for her one of the stateliest mansions in all Virginia. This handsome home, on land acquired from Richard Wyatt Royston, is the outcome of this promise, and an evident factor in overruling her objections.

The pretty Scotch name, Kenmore,—a variant of Kenmuir,—was not applied until the Gordon occupancy.

Those far-famed frescoes in the salon, the parlor, the dining-room and hall, are the admiration of the multitudes who see them. It is the work of Hessian soldiers, and was probably not completed until after the Revolution. The picture over the mantel in the spacious salon,—a trio of Aesop's fables,—was designed by Betty's illustrious brother, General Washington.

A peep over an old brick wall, in close proximity to the mansion, heavy with ivy and other vines, discloses the practical vegetable garden of

today, with possibly the same varieties which pleased the inner man in days of yore, and were instrumental in sending the red blood to the cheeks of the husky little Lewises, Betty, George, Lawrence, Robert and little Howell.

This interesting and historic old manor house, with its intimate association with many who made the history of America, its wealth of old-time memories, its rare and exquisite details of interior decoration, its several acres of attractive grounds, is being acquired by the Kenmore Association of Fredericksburg. It will be used as a memorial to commemorate for perpetuity the name of Colo-

Kenmore Interior

nel Fielding Lewis,—the first manufacturer of guns in the colonies,—where the assemblys of patriotic societies will be held, and where may be deposited records, relics and other valued possessions. Part of the obligation is still due, but under the efficient and optimistic leadership of the president of the association, Mrs. V. M. Fleming, it is thought it will soon be liquidated.

Chapter VII.

BROMPTON

"There are many homestead names that pique antiquearian curiosity. Did Brompton remember the London residence of Reverend James Marye?"

—Moncure D. Conway.

. . .

A SHORT drive from Kenmore, still skirting the southwestern limits of the town, brings one to Marye's Heights, that ridge of land familiar to every student of American history,—General Lee's headquarters in 1861. The old "stone fence," still standing on the east, served as breastworks for the Confederate infantry, which, supported by artillery posted on the heights, stubbornly repulsed the repeated attacks of General Burnside's army, December 12, 1862.

The beautiful mansion, Brompton, which crowns the topmost slope, is now the home of Captain M. B. Rowe. It still bears on its exterior the damage inflicted by shot, shell and mini-ball.

It was in 1825 that John Lawrence Marye, attorney of Fredericksburg, grandson of Reverend James Marye, Jr., became the possessor of "Brompton premises." But the stately mansion, Brompton, a genuine reflection of Colonial days, was not built until the year 1838. The substantial old home is of red brick, with columns and facings of white, and with the encircling ivy, and the spacious grounds descending to the public road, on which are dotted, at intervals, many rare and handsome shade trees,—it is indeed a spot of uncommon beauty.

The late Hon. John L. Marye, Jr., whom many of the older residents of Fredericksburg affectionately remember, told of an interesting wedding solemnized at Brompton in December, 1885, the contracting parties being Mr. Em-

Brompton

mons, an ex-Federal soldier from New Jersey, and Miss Eldridge, from the same State. The groom declared that, having failed to take the Heights under Burnside, he was determined that the goal so desperately contended for then should now, in days of bounteous peace and good will, witness the consummation of his greatest bliss.

La Vue

On the old Richmond stage-coach road, six miles south of Fredericksburg, on a pretty knoll adjoining the famous battlefield, Hamilton's Crossing, stands a substantial square brick structure, attractive in appearance, and charming in its evidence of many years of well-preserved existence.

It is La Vue, the past and present home of the Alsop family, known to have been built previous to 1819. From its porches may be seen many miles of attractive landscape in the fertile Rappahannock Valley.

Chapter VIII.

BEAUCLAIR

"Lilacs shade the front yard; Lilacs grow by the kitchen doorstep; Lilacs spring up beside the barn; Lilacs shade the well; Lilacs hang over the spring house; Lilacs crowd by the fence side, and down the country road. . . .

'I shall not go to town while the Lilacs bloom,' wrote Longfellow. . . ."

—Alice Morse Earle.

. . .

BEAUCLAIR, now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Beverley R. Harrison, is also in Spotsylvania County,—the home with the luxuriant masses of pungent boxwood, where the lilac hedges are, in season, fragrant with white and purple loveliness, and where in the summertime roses and other blossoms add their beauty and fragrance.

Go to Beauclair in "lilac-tide," and also go in the late fall season, before steam and furnace heat have awakened from their long summer sleep. You enter its hospitable portals, and on the right, and on the left, the ruddy glow of the hearth fire bids you a cheery welcome.

To those of us who have left peaceful firesides, with love, and family and friends around, the

voice of this great-throated chimney spells cheer, and peace and abounding good will. But to a mother brought face to face with this cheerful scene, after the horrors of that deluge of shot and shell, in the battle of Fredericksburg, it meant all that, and much more.

She wrote thus to her son: "When Mrs. Temple met us in the yard with her warm cordial welcome and led us into the bright, cheerful-looking room, where a good fire was blazing, and kind, sympathizing friends were all around . . . and when we lay down in comfortable beds, far away from the sight and sound of battle, we felt indeed that, after all, we were dealt with by a kind Father . . . December, 1862." Hospitable old Beauclaire was then owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Temple.

Chapter IX.

FALMOUTH

"At the silence of twilight's contemplative hour,
I have mused in sorrowful mood,
On the wind-shaken weeds that embosom the bower,
Where the home of my forefather's stood.
. . . . . .

"Yet wandering I found on my ruinous walk,
By the dial-stone aged and green,
One rose of the wilderness left on its stalk,
To mark where a garden had been. . . ."

—Thomas Campbell.

. . .

PASSING again through Fredericksburg, and for a short mile on that splendid link of the Richmond-to-Washington Highway, and over the new steel bridge, one finds himself in the ancient little village of Falmouth. Falmouth! where the atmosphere of its Scotch beginning still seems to permeate its every corner. Falmouth! where the soothing sound of the river's song is an endless melody.

Echoes from the past rebound to the receptive ear, and voices from those quaint old homes seem an almost audible sound through the consenting

environment, and here again are the Campbells' Masons, Alexanders, Carters, Seddons, Gordons, Smiths, Roses, Conways, Daniels, Forbeses, Thorntons, Dunbars, and many more. Moncure D. Conway was born at "Middleton," a few miles above Falmouth, and the house in which Mrs. Delia Forbes Smith, grandmother of Consuelo Vanderbilt, former Duchess of Marlborough, was born, is still standing in the village.

In the life of Thomas Campbell, LL. D., one reads the following: "The poet's father . . . after spending some years in Falmouth, Virginia, had established himself in Glasgow, Scotland." Dr. Kate Waller Barrett was also born in Falmouth.

In *The Herald,* Fredericksburg, of June 3, 1854, under the caption *Auld Lang Syne,* there is

Falmouth

reproduced an old undated letter from an Ellen Gray to Rose Douglas near Loch Lomond, in Scotland. It is, in part:

"Dear Rose:

"Falmouth is on a river that empties into Chesapeake Bay. The houses are perched on declivities and gigantic hills. There are mills. I love water wheels when they glisten. There are bings of poetry in the white coat of a miller. Juliet and her friend scoured the premises, and we saw scenery much wilder than any in Scotland. What a concession! It consisted of islands in the Rappahannock lying above Falmouth. We gazed on them from a long plank bridge. What a pity the Virginians will span their streams with plank instead of stone! A stone bridge overgrown with moss is a bewitching sight. Several Scotch families have lived in Falmouth, though the place is called Fal from a river in England. Among its most successful merchants was Basil Gordon. He was a native of Dumfries, a shire which the Ayrshire Ploughman has made immortal. He arrived a poor boy in Falmouth and was taken into the employment of one of the Dunbars. He died a millionaire after a life of patient industry. . . ."

Chapter X.

BELMONT

"We visited no American residence which expressed so much of the genuine home as Belmont, in Virginia."

—Mrs. David Lloyd-George.

. . .

WHEN one mounts the gigantic hills upon which is situated beautiful Belmont, and the glory of the panorama spreads before him, there is no contradicting the words of Ellen Gray. The scenery in Scotland cannot surpass this landscape. To those familiar with the lochs and hills of Scotland, a concession surely.

When Susannah Stuart Fitzhugh Knox, the daughter of Thomas Fitzhugh, of Boscobel, Stafford County, and wife of William Knox, of Windsor Lodge, Culpeper County, was on a visit to friends in Winchester, Virginia, in 1799, a paragraph in a letter to her "Dear Girls" was this: "It provokes me to think how much dearer the lots are in Falmouth [than Winchester] and this town is larger than it and Fredericksburg both

put together." (The realty market in Falmouth today must register a sad decline.)

In spite of this apparent financial problem, son after the death of her husband, that cultured product of Renfrew, Scotland, Susannah Knox, one of Virginia's intellectual daughters, came to her estate, Belmont, and spent the sunset of her life in close proximity to her old home at Boscobel, and to her daughters, several of whom had married, and settled in the neighborhood of Fredericksburg. With her the little granddaughter, Agnes Gordon Knox, used to read Milton's "Paradise Lost," the "Spectator," and many fables and allegories, and the afternoons spent at Belmont, seated at the stately old lady's feet, were her greatest delight.

William Knox was the progenitor of all of that name in Virginia, and many of the distinguished sons and daughters of the Old Dominion are descended from this couple.

Charming old portraits of William and Susannah Knox, painted by Heselius, smile down from the walls of those of their descendants who are fortunate enough to own them.

A daughter, Anne Campbell Knox, became the wife of Basil Gordon, of Falmouth, that sturdy and energetic Scotchman, who, by his thrift and foresight, became one of the pioneer millionaires of this section. Susannah Knox died at Belmont in 1823, and her last resting place is in that inter-

esting little acre, the old burying-ground in Falmouth.

Owing to the few changes in the long life of Belmont, and the consequent loving care and interest in its maintenance, the white frame mansion stands today, an example of the builders' art, and of the substantial material used in construction in the old days. Improvements and alterations have been made in conformity to the original plan. Time and weather, without detracting, have added their mellow note, and the size of those magnificent trees is evidence of the ripe old age of the grounds.

Belmont is now owned and occupied by that eminent artist, Gari Melchers, and his family. Mr. Melchers' canvasses received the high acclaim of lovers of art wherever art is known.

Belmont

A charming little gem of stone, another needed studio, has lately been completed. Beyond the mansion, and nearer the hilltop, whose base is washed by the Rappahannock River, it nestles in the midst of the tall oaks and maples, a spot where is blended in right roportions these pleasing elements, beauty, music, romance, poetry and perfume.

Chapter XI.

CARLTON HEIGHTS

"What fragrances arose from that old garden and were wafted out to passers-by!"

—Alice Morse Earle.

. . .

ONE must not leave the picturesque hills of this vicinity without a peep at Carlton Heights, the home of the Misses O'Bannon. The white frame dwelling has long passed the century mark, but is wonderfully well-preserved. To the left of the front entrance, crowning the topmost terrace, the highest point around, a great hickory tree spreads its waving branches, and from the shadowed lawn the stretch of landscape spread before, rivals in majestic beauty the scene from the Belmont hills.

Down below the little village seems to rest in retrospective mood. The smoke from the busy factories scattered long since, and the hum of machinery, with the shrill monotone of diligent whistles, are sounds of past days.

The little brick church "that tops the neighboring hill" adds an interesting line to the poetry

From Carlton Heights

of the panorama. The sweeping hills and dales are dark with forest trees prominently silhouetted against the southern sky, and the tortuous windings of the Rappahannock seem a gleaming silver ribbon in the distance.

In the War Between the States this old home was, for a time, the headquarters of the Federal General Hays and his staff. But because it was out of range of the firing line, it was practically undamaged.

The pretty country seat on Scott's Hill opposite, now the home of Mrs. Michael Wallace, was not so fortunate. But clever restoration, without detracting from its quaintness, has made of it a charming residence.

It was through two thousand feet of blue ether above this old home, then occupied by the Misses Scott, that the first successful air message was sent during the War Between the States:

"Balloon in the Air, April 29, 1863.
"MAJOR-GENERAL BUTTERFIELD,
"Chief of Staff, Army of the Potomac.

"GENERAL: The enemy's line of battle is formed at the edge of the woods . . . from Taylor's Hill to some distance to the left of our lower crossing. Their line appears quite thin compared with our forces. Their tents all remain as heretofore as far as I can see.

"T. C. S. LOWE,
"Chief of Aeronauts."

About three miles above Falmouth is the still-delightful old home, Glencairne, perhaps more intimately associated with the prolific "Race of Moncure" today than any other country seat in all of Stafford County.

It was here that the distinguished Judge R. C. L. Moncure, for more than thirty years on the Supreme Bench of the Virginia Court of Appeals, was born, lived, and died. It is now the home of his grandson, Judge R. H. L. Chichester, and his family.

Could one turn back the hand of time, or a deaf ear to the call of those enchanting homes where the river widens, his steps would linger awhile amid the old haunts of this vicinity.

Chapter XII.

CHATHAM

"Across the river from Fredericksburg, stands Chatham, the old Fitzhugh home, one of the most charming of early Virginia mansions."

—Julian Street.

. . .

WHEN returning to a terraced hillside directly opposite Fredericksburg one is carried away in spirit to distant England.

The old manor house of gleaming white brick is distinctly Georgian as to both exterior and interior architecture and decoration.

On the river side is the exquisite Colonial doorway, with its significant symbol of hospitality,—and never was symbol more fittingly placed!—Englsh ivy clings to either side, and a hedge of age-old box leads to the stone steps which descend the grassy ramps to the terraces below. On the left of the topmost terrace an unusual Japanese ginko spreads its branches, like maiden-hair ferns, in all directions. The oaks and elms, wonderful in size and symmetry, are stamped with majestic

old age, and scraggy locusts are beautiful with their green and purple garniture of wistaria wreaths and garlands.

The flagstone court, with each segment circled by soft greensward, is on the east side of the mansion, and hedges of stately cedars and dogwood inclose the fascinating formal flower gardens, gay with a bewildering riot of blossoms in season. The rose garden, with its soft carpet of Japanese turf, and its border of rare vines, is alluring, and little nymphs surmount their pedestals on tiptoe, the better to guard this fairy spot.

A stout brick wall incloses the whole. All is in harmony with the tone of old England.

This is Chatham Manor, in Stafford County, the home of Colonel and Mrs. Daniel B. Devore.

If one could lift for a moment that impenetrable veil of mystery which encircles the early days of Chatham, and segregate the simple facts from the alloy of fickle tradition, what a benefactor he would be!

It was built in Colonial days, by that sterling patriot, William Fitzhugh, son of Henry Fitzhugh, of Eagle's Nest, and Lucy, daughter of "King" Carter, of Lancaster County. He shared with other Americans of his time the high regard and admiration for that illustrious English orator and statesman, William Pitt, on whom, 1766, the title of Lord Chatham was conferred.

It is not surprising that, possibly after considering many names for his American estate, he selected one complimenting that great advocate of conciliatory policy towards the colonies, who declared with such eloquence against the arbitrary measures of the mother country.

William Fitzhugh selected as his bride Ann Randolph, of Chatsworth, Henrico County. Their daughter, Mary, became the wife of George Washington Parke Custis, of Arlington, grandson of Martha Washington. Bishop Meade says of Mary Fitzhugh Custis:

". . . For all the virtues which adorn the wife, the mother, and the friend, I have never known her superior."

Their daughter, Mary Randolph Custis, by marrying him, who was afterwards General

At Chatham

Robert E. Lee, united the two great American families of Washington and Lee.

Tradition asserts that those rare old trees at Chatham, or the lofty panelled walls of the interior were silent witnesses of the plighted troth of George Washington and Martha Dandridge Custis, and of Robert E. Lee and Mary Custis. Of the love affairs of the former in connection with Chatham, one flounders in the dark.

But it is certain that Washington's frequent visits to Chatham were among his most "interesting memories," and that he enjoyed, as nowhere else, Mr. Fitzhugh's "good dinners, good wine, and good company." One is satisfied that, at least, a subsequent recital of the old story was whispered here, if not the original.

And it is not at all unreasonable that Robert E. Lee may have begun, or continued, his courtship at the loved old home so long associated with the ancestors of the splendid woman who became his wife.

"Fitzhugh of Chatham" gave much time to the service of his country, being successively a member of the House of Burgesses, of several important conventions, of the County Committee of Safety, of the Continental Congress, and of the Virginia House of Delegates. He was also one of the foremost of Virginia gentlemen in the introduction of thoroughbred horses into the colony, and throughout his busy career was much

interested in the sports of the turf. His horses were known throughout the length and breadth of the Old Dominion, and his private race course was of no mean dimensions.

Through the heavy portals of the massive brick wall of today one sees a fancied image of the aristocratic and sporting blood of Tidewater and Piedmont Virginia, assembled for a preliminary meet before the great Mulberry races in the spring.

Here are representatives from the Fredericksburg Jockey Club, and Carters, Randolphs, Tayloes, Byrds, Wormeleys, Lees, Fairfaxes, and many more are here, and three-cornered hats, silver knee-buckles, and powdered wigs are in evidence. And consorts and daughters are here, too, with panniers, hoop skirts, and hair craped high, and poke bonnets over charming faces, and chivalry and beauty, and gallantry, all are characteristic of the gay assembly.

Conspicuous on the track, impatient to be off, and held in check by the ebony jockey in gay attire, are Yorick and Traveller, the pride of the Mt. Airy Stables; Kitty Fisher, Regulus, Brilliant, and Volunteer of William Fitzhugh, Thomas Minor's Fearnought, Robert Slaughter's Ariel, Peter Conway's Mary Gray, Alexander Spotswood's Sterling, and other famous horses.

Chapter XIII.

TRAVELLER'S REST

"Not far from 'Pine Grove' was Traveller's Rest, the most beautiful and significant of all the ambitious names of stately mansions on the Rappahannock."

—Mrs. Roger A. Pryor.

. . .

RELUCTANTLY leaving these fancied scenes of yesterday, which mingle in such harmonious blend with fascinating Chatham today, we find ourselves on the King's Highway, still in Stafford, and en route to Traveller's Rest. This substantial old square brick house occupies one of the most beautiful slopes on the river. It has long past the century mark, having been built by John Gray, who afterwards made his home at Wakefield, Westmoreland County. It has ever since been in possession of members of that family. Today it is owned and occupied by Mr. J. Bowie Gray and daughter. It is situated several hundred yards from the road, at the end of an inviting avenue of pines, and the shade of the spreading trees, the comfort and hospitality

which radiate from the mansion, the old well with its bucket "dripping with coolness," combine to make its name significant.

The grounds on the river front slope gently down from the house, and when within a few feet from the river descend in a precipitous fall to the water's brink. Its emerald surface is bordered by giant trees, and its sole furnishing is the interesting old sun-dial, whose very presence is an expression of bygone days.

The family heirlooms in mahogany, silver, china, embroidery and cross-stitch make the indoors most attractive. Pictures of Catharine Willis, the child-wife of Atcheson Gray, are shown to the visitor. During the brief months of married life of this youthful couple Traveller's Rest and Wakefield claimed them. Atcheson

Traveller's Rest

Gray died within the year, and the charming little widow of fourteen summers removed with her parents to Florida, where in a short time Prince Achille Murat, son of the exiled King of Naples, fell a victim t oher charms. His attachment was reciprocated, and she became the Princess Catharine Murat, well known in America and in European courts. Many distinguished sons and daughters of Virginia today glory in their relationship to this couple. She died in Florida in 1867.

The tourist must not leave this locality without a peep at Snowdon, where once stood the old Seddon home, one of the beautiful home sites on the river. But this glorious old Stafford hill has been minus its mansion for many years, for here was enacted one of the tragedies of the War Between the States. It was the home of John Seddon, but Northern soldiers, mistaking it for the country seat of his brother, James Alexander Seddon, then Secretary of War of the Southern Confederacy, burned it to the ground.

Chapter XIV.

PINE GROVE

"Little George had scarcely attained his fifth year, when his father left Pope's Creek, and came up to a plantation which he had in Stafford, opposite to Fredericksburg. . . . One day in the garden, . . . he unluckily tried the edge of his hatchet on the body of a beautiful young English cherry tree, which he barked so terribly that I don't believe the tree ever got the better of it. . . ."

—Mason L. Weems.

. . .

IN passing one must pause a moment at the Washington Farm, once the Ferry Farm, or Pine Grove, the present home of Mr. J. B. Colbert and family. A comfortable, modern frame dwelling now stands where the hip-roofed cottage with dormer windows once lifted "its low and modest front of faded red over the turbid waters of the Rappahannock." The widow and her illustrious sons are there no more, and nothing is visible to remind one that the great name of Washington was closely associated there.

Here is surely a cherry tree today, and over there a blossoming apple orchard, drawing its sustenance from the identical soil as that other orchard, where, we are told, Augustine Washing-

ton carried his little son to exemplify the goodness and generosity of God Almighty. The orchard, where, according to Parson Weems, "the trees were bending under the weight of apples, which hung in clusters like grapes, and vainly strove to hide their blushing cheeks behind the green leaves."

But even tradition, which often sacrifices truth to create an entertaining story, does not hint the possibility of the same cherry or apple line of descent.

Crossing the bridge, the tourist finds himself once more in Fredericksburg. It is hard to pass quickly through the old town, where on every side are definite messages from a worthy and picturesque past. But the river is calling us on. Historic old homes extend from their hospitable depths a beckoning hand, and the summons is irresistible.

Chapter XV.

MANNSFIELD HILL

(FORMERLY SMITHFIELD)

"It was an estate . . . bought by my grandfather Taliaferro, who then resided at Epsom, the adjoining estate, and he gave it to my mother—God bless her. The estate now belongs to Mr. Thomas Pratt; the old house in which I was born is burnt down, and he has built a new one, not so large and higher up the river."

—JUDGE FRANCIS TALIAFERRO BROOKE.

. . .

ABOUT three miles from Fredericksburg, on the Tidewater Trail, stands Mannsfield Hall, now occupied at intervals by heirs of the estate of the late Captain R. Conroy Vance. Very recently it has been purchased by a syndicate of business and professional men, and plans are well under way to convert this very charming old home into an ideal country club. Topographically, its prospective golf course will be one of the finest in America.

Tradition, with many proofs of accuracy, tells us that the old place, Smithfield, now absorbed in Mannsfield, was named for Major Lawrence Smith, he who, "at a grande assembly, held at

James City in 1674, . . ." was ordered to command a fort, to be built at or near the Falls of the Rappahannock. The whole story of this old fort and its "chiefe commander" are enveloped in that subtle atmosphere of mystery which lends an undisputed charm to romance. Human nature craves that which it is denied. The child ruthlessly and with no thought of dire consequences tears off the top of his toy in order to see the mystery of the works, and a busy adult neglects that which lies within his vision, to spend precious hours in vainly striving to turn a rusty key in an impossible lock, in order to open the gateway to paths of discovery or information.

The main central structure of the present handsome and commodious home, Mannsfield Hall, was built in 1805 by Thomas Pratt, and at that time and many years thereafter was known as Smithfield. Alterations were made and wings added about 1890. Since then it has been "Mannsfield Hall."

Smithfield was the early home of Governor Robert Brooke and his distinguished family, but the location of his dwelling was several rods farther down the river.

It was here that Dr. Lawrence Brooke, surgeon on board the celebrated privateer, Bonne Homme Richard, of John Paul Jones, was born; also his brother, that eminent Virginia jurist, Judge Francis T. Brooke.

Near-by are still the ruins of old Mannsfield, well known as being the old Spotsylvania home of Mann Page, member of the House of Burgesses, prominent in all the affairs of the colonies, and ancestor of a host of eminent citizens. He married Mary, daughter of Colonel John Tayloe, the builder of Mt. Airy, in Richmond County. The handsome stone mansion built in 1749, to which he brought his bride, was similar in many respects to the beautiful home of her girlhood.

William Bernard, of Belle Grove, in King George County, was the next owner of this beautiful estate. At the close of the War Between the States it was burned to the ground. North Carolina soldiers, mistaking the high polish of the wooden floors for stone, cooked their meals upon its surface. The bare stone walls alone remained. Of late years many of the solid old sandstone blocks have been carted away and disposed of. The quoins in one of the store buildings on Main Street, Fredericksburg, are part of the lovely home of Mann and Mary Tayloe Page. Today there is nothing left to tell the story of Pages and Bernards but a corner of the old stone wall, which rears its massive blocks to the skies. The chestnut trees, now dead, once the glory of Mannsfield, lift their naked limbs far above the lowing cows which feed in the meadow below. A tangle of wild grapevines clings sympathetically

to the base of the deserted old ruin. Gayly flaunting sunflowers and hollyhocks add a somewhat inharmonious note to the sunny side. But the same monotone of the river, which soothed the Pages and Bernards, is heard not far away.

Chapter XVI.

ST. JULIEN

"Away to the left stretched a meadow bordered by a clear running brook, a tributory of the Massaponax. . . . A generation later, Jackson's infantry and Pelham's guns thundered along that stream. . . ."

—General Dabney Herndon Maury.

. . .

A MILE or two below Mannsfield Hall, but now in Caroline County, stands another old Brooke estate, St. Julien. Very beautiful it still is, though its occupants, Judge Francis T. Brooke and his second wife, Mary Champe Carter Brooke, have been sleeping for many years under the ivy and periwinkle on the summit of a near-by hill commanding a glorious view of the surrounding country. The present owner, Mr. Aubin Boulware, lives elsewhere, and, as is frequently the case, the substantial old brick home has passed into the hands of caretakers. It is situated in a quiet valley. A huge magnolia softens the sun's rays on the south, and big crepe myrtles on each side add to the attractiveness of the recessed doorway and the worn stone steps. Immense

catalpa, elm, cedar, holly, and black walnut trees adorn the spacious grounds, and a winding brook, with its cheerful chatter, borders the meadow which stretches away to the east. Great masses of sweet grapevine, blackberry fronds and honeysuckle arch above, and are reflected from its shady depths.

Though the Brookes are there no more, and the old landscape paper has disappeared, together with the family portraits, and the beautiful India china, of which "Phyllis, the best cook on the Rappahannock," was so careful, its attractive out-of-doors, its delicately carved and still carefully kept cornices, mantels and panels, its transoms and windows, its circular stairway, its reminders and memories of a significant past, make of it today a delightful spot.

Filed with the executive archives of the State of Virginia is an interesting letter from Judge Brooke to General William Lambert, which is here reproduced:

"St. Julien, *June 26, 1838.*

"My Dear Sir:

"I have received your letter from Richmond. All I remember of John P. Jones I had from my brother, Doctor Brooke, who was surgeon of the Bon Homme Richard, the whole of her celebrated cruise. I think I remember, when very young, to have seen him in 1773. I was at school in Fredericksburg, and his brother, William Paul, was a Scotch tailor, who made my clothes. On

his death John came to Fredericksburg to administer on his property. I then saw him in the shop when I went for my clothes. This, on seeing his picture years after, I remembered; it is a mistake that his brother was a merchant. I do not think that he remained long in Fredericksburg. The next year I think he was employed in the navy.

"Yours very sincerely,
"FRANCIS T. BROOKE."

We must not wander too far from the river's call. After leaving St. Julien, and once again on the Richmond highway, we return for a mile or two, until the friendly guide-post at the fork of the road shows the Tidewater Trail to the right.

Belvidere Farm

Belvidere Farm, one of the big estates of Mr. Alexander Berger, is shortly reached. Colonel William Dangerfield settled at Belvidere in 1760, and since that date several generations of the same name have owned the property. It is said that in the early days life here was typical of the great houses of Virginia. Traces of period representation are still visible, and the charming bit of red brick architecture, embowered in vines, has unmistakable marks of former size. The eager visitor persuades himself that such was undoubtedly the case.

From the fascinating old diary of John Harrower, a tutor in the Dangerfield family, one

learns much of the interesting domestic life at Belvidere, though the diary is, as is often the case, teeming with irregularities (to be charitable!) in English and spelling.

He graphically describes the part taken by the master of Belvidere in the famous Fredericksburg races in October, 1774. He names the winning horses, and the purses for which they ran. He tells of a dinner party at Belvidere, in the same month, when the guests included General Washington's lady, her son, John Parke Custis, and his wife, Eleanor Calvert; Mrs. Spotswood, of Newport; the Misses Washington and Dandridge, and others, "they being all of the highest rank and fortune of any in the colony."

The Rappahannock flows on the east, and Snow Creek and Massaponax Run are not far away.

How the little Dangerfields,—Edwin, Bathurst, Hannah Bassett, and little William,—must have loved their river-side home!

Mr. Henry Taylor was the next owner of Belvidere. It is said that he also purchased Nottingham, near-by, and the several plantations together were, for a while, known as *Glen Mary*. Harrower says, "In the sweet spring weather fifty white ewes and lambs feed upon the sloping lawn." Many times that number now gambol, as they did in that distant day, upon the thousand hills of Belvidere, and thereabouts.

The little lamb with its "fleece as white as snow"! Glen Mary, the euphonic old name! Maryton, the present post-office and school near-by (though unpicturesque and practical)! a fitting setting for that little jingle which stirred our souls in the Elysian days of our childhood.

Hayfield

Surely the visitor to this region must come with time to linger. The spell of the old homes in this vicinity is not to be overcome. Not far from Belvidere is the stout old gray brick home, Hayfield-on-the-Rappahannock.

Lawrence Battaile did not name his lovely estate for the excellence or exurberance of its provender. Its name has an apt and meaning significance. It was one method of preserving indefinitely the name of the progenitors of the bride

Hayfield

he brought to Hayfield, and the name Hay was well deserving of perpetuity.

We pass through the entrance of the old stone wall, half-hidden by its drapery of English ivy, and up the avenue bordered by willows, lindens, and cedars. Presently the south-facing house, with its portico supported by imposing columns, is visible through the mazes of shrubbery and rare trees. The beauty of its other architectural features, and its unusual wealth of roses climbing high on the house, and thick-starred with blossoms, is very impressive.

On entering the mansion the details of its interior, with its broad and breezy halls, its creamy white cornices, panels and other decoration, bear authentic proof of its many years of existence, and of the painstaking upkeep of its present appreciative owners.

Possibly the culture, talents, refinement and wealth of the Hays, Battailes, Willises, Dangerfields, Garnetts, Hoomes, and other kindred families, are responsible, in part, for the distinctive charm which undoubtedly pervades the loved old home today. Its individuality,—in every case a pleasing asset,—is emphasized, and the versatility and artistry of the less sensitive sex is proven by the clever manner in which its interesting household activities are directed.

Messrs. Alexander Berger and Francis Levering are the gracious hosts at beautiful old Hayfield today.

Chapter XVII.

PROSPECT HILL

"Close the eyes, let yesterday and tomorrow rise with today, and all Virginia is a garden! It smells of the rose, it smells of the locust blossom, it smells of the cedar."

—Mary Johnston.

. . .

AN inviting roadway leads to the right, and great branches of oak, sycamore, maple and elm, wreathed with honeysuckle, shade its serpentine trail. This entrance-way to the interior of historic old Caroline is indeed entrancing.

Caroline County, with its memories of Edmund Pendleton, William Woodford, Richard Brooke, and John Taylor! and the names Battaile, Fitzhugh, Gordon, Hay, Corbin, and many more, are associated with the best in every phase of life in this locality.

At the base of a succession of nature's terraces we pause, for crowning this elevation is another homestead so attractive and commanding that a stop of a moment is imperative. The vines clinging close to the substantial brick house, the great

sprawling shade trees, with every evidence of well-preserved old age, the atmosphere of the place, with the mellow tone of its ensemble, attest the near-century of its existence. This is Prospect Hill.

The present house, erected on an old Battaile home site, was built by Basil Gordon, when his daughter, Mrs. Charles Herndon, of Fredericksburg, was in her baby days. She is now one of the city's oldest and most-loved residents.

After several careful owners and tenants, Mr. and Mrs. Clifford L. Gage now have it in appreciative possession.

The house is beautiful, with its spacious rooms, breezy halls, and wonderful woodwork. But it is the out-of-doors surrounding Prospect Hill that is the more impressive. In the adjacent woods the old gun pits and breastworks, relics of the War Between the States, and the family burying-ground not far away, are interesting reminders of another day and generation.

But the garden at Prospect Hill, with its luxuriant masses of bridal wreath! Go there in the early spring, when nature in lavish mood has just perfected her most pleasing plans. The poplar, locust, linden and walnut trees have lately donned their spring attire. The hollies have freshened up their dress a bit. Hedges are brilliant with the blossoms of early spring roses. Robins, wrens and bluebirds are caroling their sweet song

of satisfaction, for mating time is here, and the choice of homes in this favored spot, whether in the blossoming shrubbery or the tall treetop, is reason enough for joyful warble.

Nowhere does the bridal wreath attain the same grace and luxuriance. In wreaths and garlands and plumes it waves in the gentle breeze on this salubrious hilltop. A forest of dainty white blossoms is massed on each side of the entrance on the east, and of that on the west. Another avenue extends to the privet hedge, and still another mingles its snowy white blossoms with the tangle of roses and honeysuckle near the vegetable garden.

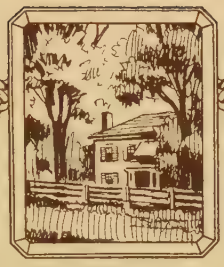
Then when summer comes there are masses of weigelia, summer lilacs, clematis, calycanthus, iris, and gay perennials in glowing color and frag-

Prospect Hill

rance. Between the flowering quince and the big euonymus bush is sunk a concrete bird bath. With hearts filled full of the joy of existence, they chatter over their daily splash. Bees are lazily droning out their same old summer song. Butterflies flit around their favorite flowers. The timid squirrel peeps from behind the big tree trunk, but like a flash he is safe in its leafy branch. All nature is attuned to the season.

It was not alone the song of the birds, nor the charm of the trees and flowers, nor the excellent flavor of the Caroline tobacco, nor was it the many miles of pleasing landscape, with its swelling hills and laughing dales, which so frequently lured Henry Fitzhugh, the young master of Bedford, from his home across the Rappahannock. The rumble of his coach and four was no infrequent sound, and on a fair October day in 1748 pretty Sarah Battaile became the bride of the rich young heir of Bedford, in Stafford County, now King George.

Fourteen sons and daughters blessed this union. Surely Father Abraham, with his numberless descendants, had nothing on the Virginia Fitzhughs!



Chapter XVIII.

SANTEE

"I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

. . . . . .

A tree whose hungry mouth is pressed
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast.

. . . . . .

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair:

. . . . . .

But only God can make a tree."

—Joyce Kilmer.

. . .

NOT far from Prospect Hill, over a short stretch of pretty woodland road, stands Santee, an old Gordon home, built in 1807 by Battaile Fitzhugh.

The sturdy old red brick house promises to endure through many centuries to come. Here is still the box and ivy, and in the rose garden the mammoth bushes tell the tale of many years. Could they have come from the pretty gardens at Rose Hill, Orange County, the home of the little bride, Rose Taliaferro Fitzhugh? Possibly

Santee

they are lineal descendants of those "back home" planted by her hand.

Over there is the grapevine dell, possibly where Patsy, the only child of Battaile and Rose Fitzhugh, delighted the ardent young lover, Samuel Gordon, Jr., of historic Kenmore, when she blushingly admitted her love. "But," protested Patsy, "I shall never leave Santee."

Several generations of Gordons have since occupied the loved old home. Today, Mrs. Robert V. Gordon and family reside there.

As attractive as is the substantial and commodious house, it is that splendid park of kingly forest trees, which is the captivating feature to many. No one with love for old gardens, and reverence for old trees, and familiarity with a little poem seen in a copy of the *Southern Literary Magazine* could go to Santee without a recurrence of these lines:

> I have loved gardens tapestried with bloom,
> In patterns of warm color and perfume;
> Gardens to which a poet might have brought
> The fragrant inspiration of his thought,
> And poured it forth where I could breathe it yet,
> From rose, geranium and mignonette,
> Yet I forgot the intimate spell of these,
> In the enchantment of the trees—old trees.
>
> I have loved many a meadow, daisy pied—
> Childhood's Elysium in the summertide—
> And made a little song about a star,
> That is no lovelier than daisies are,
> But when young maple leaves turned, one by one,
> Their shimmering silver linings to the sun,
> I joyously renounced all other ecstasies
> In the keen rapture of the trees—old trees.

Chapter XIX.

MOSS NECK

"We spent the winter of 1862 at Moss Neck, an old mansion on the crest of hills which stretches along the Rappahannock, several miles below Fredericksburg."

—JOHN ESTEN COOK.

. . .

ANOTHER handsome Rappahannock home not far from Santee is Moss Neck, for many years the home of the Corbin family, now owned by Count D'Adhemar, whose residence is elsewhere.

The advent of the automobile, which has played so prominent a part in eliminating isolation, seems powerless in the case of some of the charming Virginia homes. Perhaps in that distant day, when lateral roads are like the highways, these loved old homes will be once more inhabited by the owner, and not given entirely over to the caretaker.

The spacious building is of brick, flanked on either side with wings and surmounted with a cupola which gives it individuality. It presents

somewhat the appearance of an old English seat of the Georgian period, though the present house is of much later date.

The place was occupied during the winter of 1861-62 by Stonewall Jackson and his men.

Mr. Corbin kindly placed rooms in his spacious dwelling house at the disposal of the great Southern leader, but with characteristic thoughtfulness he feared to inconvenience the family, so a small hunting lodge near-by was accepted.

The lower room of the lodge, which he used as an office, was interesting with trophies of the chase, representing years of luck behind the hounds.

Many of the Corbins, and their visitors and neighbors, were true sportsmen.

Moss Neck

A large tent pitched on the grass served as mess-room for his military family. The three winter months he spent here were brightened by occasional visits from Generals Lee and Stuart, whose headquarters were not far away. On Christmas day Jackson's aides-de-camp gave a sumptuous turkey and oyster dinner for their commander-in-chief and his senior generals.

Chapter XX.

GAY MONT

"Ole Missis' flowers was so sweet you could smell 'em a mile away—jest as soon as you turned onto de abenue."
—"Uncle Roly," *a faithful slave at Gay Mont.*

* * *

GAY MONT, two miles from Port Royal, is another old home in Caroline County. This, to many persons, holds more charm and individuality than any other in this section. Not because of its massive proportions. It has none. Not because of the luxuriance or grandeur of its architecture. Many another excels on this point. But every leaf of ivy encircling the giant trees, every sprig from the aromatic boxwood, every rosebud from the bushes on that semi-circular slope, seem to tell in convincing language the story of nearly two centuries of happy home and family life.

Tradition says the original house was built in 1725. That during the occupancy of one of its early owners, John Hipkins, the estate was known as Rose Hill, and continued under that appella-

tion until 1816, when John Bernard, grandson and heir of Hipkins, wooed and won the lovely Gay Robertson, of Richmond. The name Rose Hill was immediately changed to significant Gay Mont.

The original building consisted of the present two-story central part. The wings which flank the sides, and also the portico, were added in 1798. The octagonal music-room in the rear not until 1830.

Gay Mont presents one of the earliest uses of stucco as an outside covering to a frame building, it having been applied at the time of the additions in 1798.

The old homestead is still in possession of lineal descendants of John Hipkins. Helen, the youngest daughter of John Bernard, married, soon after the War Between the States, Philip Lightfoot Robb, and their children and children's children, several of whom are far away, count it as a great pleasure and privilege to return to the home of their childhood, whenever opportunity offers. Not long since a busy business man, a relative, and a frequent guest at Gay Mont, said he much preferred a summer there to a summer of travel in Europe.

The fascinating old landscape paper, an importation from France, still clings to the walls in a marvelous state of preservation. That in the hall represents Italian scenes in color. In the

parlor the soft gray tones picture the Bay of Naples. In the dining-room mythological or Indian characters are represented in sepia.

A peep down the gravelled paths, bordered with boxwood, pyrus japonica, bridal wreath, lilac, forsythia, or weigelia, discloses the flower garden, gay with old-fashioned favorites, where the cheery sun-dial "tells only the sunny hours."

A hedge of blossoming altheas,—the other name, Rose of Sharon, seems best suited to lovely Gay Mont,—incloses the grounds. From the formal rose garden which graces the big terrace on the front a splendid picture of far-reaching hill and dale, with the Rappahannock in the distance, is spread.

But we cannot remain long enough to hear all the interesting story of Gay Mont. With a re-

At Gay Mont

luctant goodby, we thank the fates for making this visit possible, while way down deep somewhere in our innermost being some cord in our code of ethics has been gently touched, and an indefinite desire to live to finer ideals possesses us,—the culture, the intelligence, and, above all, the honest and straight-forward sincerity of our forefathers is, as never before, realized.

Chapter XXI.

PORT CONWAY

"Mrs. Madison was on a visit to her home at Port Conway, when her first child, James, was born. . . ."
—Reverend Horace E. Hayden.

. . .

HERE is now the sleepy little village of Port Royal, whose northern limits are washed by the waters of the Rappahannock. It was created in 1744 by the House of Burgesses. There is still current, belief in the traditional story that Port Royal came within one vote of being the capital of the United States!

Its functions are impaired by old age, and many changes in environment, and it seems satisfied to rest in retrospective reflection on its past historic activities, the antiquity of which story is visibly expressed in the abundant masses, and again the scattering clumps of vigorous boxwood, in the ancient residences still to be seen, mainly in part, with quaint dormer windows, and coping of a period long gone, and in the giant terraces stepping down to the river's edge. Here on these terraces were discussed affairs of church, and affairs of State, by Gilchrists, Lightfoots, Roys,

Catletts, Hipkins, Bernards, Tennants, and others of an ancient day. But that day is long past. Surely Auburn did not present a more deserted air than does Port Royal today!

Another little river port on the opposite bank holds out a welcoming hand. This is Port Conway, named in honor of the forbears of that worthy statesman, the eleventh President of the United States, James Madison. At this point the Rappahannock begins to widen, and the broad reach of water, always attractive, is enhanced by the quaint little villages of Port Royal and Port Conway, each picturesquely situated on its hilltop on each side of the valley.

The broad acres of Belle Grove and Walsingham farms, embracing the waving alfalfa fields, add in no small degree to the aesthetic, as well as the economic features of the locality.

At Port Royal

Chapter XXII.

BELLE GROVE

"The proportions and details of the Doric and Ionic orders [at Belle Grove] indicate a thorough acquaintance with them, . . . The modelling of the Ionic capitals . . . and of the stone guards to the steps of the water-front porch discloses the hand of the skilful designer and carver."

—Frank C. Baldwin.

. . .

BELLE GROVE, that still handsome home, now the property of Mr. William H. Allen, Jr., is set upon a high bluff just below Port Conway. In the seventeenth century, the land whereon the present structure stands was associated with the name of John Prosser, and later Anthony Savage.

In the middle of the eighteenth century it was possessed by Francis Conway. Then by deed it was conveyed to John Hipkins, who, it is supposed, built the main part of the present house in 1790. William Bernard, the son-in-law of John Hipkins, was the next owner, and Carolinus Turner, who added the one-story wings, was the owner and occupant for years.

Some of the distinctive features of Belle Grove are the stately terraces of the water-front, which lead directly to the river's edge, whereon are still many of the flowering shrubs and vines of ante-bellum days, the circular stone steps on the east, and the unusual curved lines of the two-story porches, supported by graceful columns.

These, with other features, reveal the taste and ingenuity of the architect, and the landscape gardener, and combine to make of Belle Grove a rare and agreeable place of residence.

A few years ago the old foundation and the crumbled bricks of the dwelling house of Francis Conway were still to be seen. The daughter of Francis and Rebecca Catlett Conway was the beautiful Eleanor Rose Conway, always affectionately called "Nellie," who in 1749 became the bride of Colonel James Madison, of stately Montpelier, in Madison County. In the spring of 1751 Nellie Madison visited the old homestead at Port Conway. The March winds, sometimes gentle, had brought the robins and bluebirds, and had awakened into life the jonquils, crocuses, and pyrus japonica. On the sixteenth of that month little James Madison, Jr., was born. Possibly the same germ of good statesmanship, so active in the near-by section, was wafted up the Rappahannock, and absorbed by the embryonic chieftain as he watched the lights and shadows play on the walls of the big chamber in King George County.

Unwillingly leaving Belle Grove and all the charm of its natural and architectural features, one finds himself next under that beautiful grove of trees, where, until the spring of 1924, imposing old Oakenbrow stood, a harmonizing background.

At that time a disastrous fire swept over the estate, and Oakenbrow is now relegated to the halls of oblivion, with many another of the handsome old Virginia homes.

It was built in long-ago days by the Tayloes, restored by later occupants, and the estate is now owned by Dr. Joseph Low. It carried its old age with a worthy dignity, and its fate is regretted near and far.

Chapter XXIII.

CLEVELAND AND ROKEBY

"These homes were then the abode of very great comfort and dignity; a generous and elegant hospitality was universal. The house servants were long and carefully trained. . . . The usual retinue of the establishment at Cleveland, my wife's home, was fifteen servants or more. . . ."

—General Dabney H. Maury.

. . .

LEAVING Oakenbrow, we drive through several miles of rustic road, until the King's Highway is reached. In a short space of time we arrive at Cleveland, where a generous hospitality has been dispensed by successive generations of the Mason family from the early days of the nineteenth century until today.

The present comfortable, square frame structure, now the home of Mrs. Henry Mason, is white with green shutters, and is built on the same stone foundation of its rambling predecessor. The square brick tiles of the walkway and the circular stone steps are witnesses of that

early home. Rustic seats are invitingly placed today under the shade of those handsome old magnolia, oak, poplar and mimosa trees. One's imagination loves to picture those shady retreats at Cleveland as trysting places for those gallant army officers, who won the hearts and hands of the pretty Mason girls. General Sherman, after a discouraging Mexican situation, predicted: "Those Mason girls will break up the army."

It is told that during the War Between the States a regiment under the command of an Englishman, Sir Percy Windham, looted Cleveland, and carried off a great store of choice old wines and brandy. When Mr. Mason returned from Fredericksburg that day, and found his house thus invaded, he appealed to the colonel of the regiment for redress, and through him the family Bible of his son-in-law, Dabney H. Maury, was restored. But his choice wine was gone forever, except a quart of "Tinto Madeira," which was kindly given to one of his servants by a good-natured soldier who, as General Maury expressed it, had no turn for such "thin tipple" after the choice old brandy.

Fortunately—or unfortunately—for Lieutenant Ambrose Burnside, at least, this affair took place after the wedding of pretty Nannie Mason to Lieutenant Maury. Lieutenant Burnside, afterwards General, attended the nuptials, and, being an ardent enthusiast and connoisseur of spirited

beverages, the presence of these choice commodities greatly increased his pleasure and good cheer on the occasion.

When in the vicinity of Cleveland one must peep into Rokeby, the handsome summer home of Hon. Langbourne Williams and family.

The big frame house, once the residence of Mr. Gustavus B. Wallace and family, is very attractive, even though one fails to see the signs of mellowed age, which lend their charm and give character to many of the Rappahannock homes.

It commands an extended view of an interesting stretch of King George County, and with the addition of its out-of-door equipment, including those commodious and inviting porticos, the

Cleveland

grand old trees, the alluring flower garden, and the summer house, with its tempting shade, it will not soon be forgotten.

Across the road from the driveway into Rokeby another driveway leads south, and the ever-welcome guide-post says "Hopyard," a name associated for years with this locality, and with the Rappahannock steamers. As a wharf, the day of its business activities is somewhat spent, the automobile and the auto-truck having usurped much of the river's trade.

The pleasant summer home of Judge A. T. Embrey and family is located here. This was one of the many estates in the Counties of King George and Stafford associated with the old name of Fitzhugh. In 1787 John Fitzhugh, of Bellaire, conveyed the old place, then called Feneaux, or The Hopyard, over to Daniel McCarty Fitzhugh.

At that time it contained four hundred and seventy-three acres.

Returning to Port Conway, we stop for a moment to see an interesting sun-dial, which has lately been placed on the sunny lawn of the peaceful little ivy-hung Emmanuel Episcopal Church. The river is re-crossed, and Port Royal is here again.

Chapter XXIV.

CAMDEN

"Yonder flows the Rappahannock; the oaks sigh; the sunshine laughs;"

—John Esten Cook.

. . .

ABOUT six miles below Port Royal, within sight and sound of the Rappahannock, is Camden, which for nearly seventy years has stood a well-defined synonym for true-hearted hospitality, and an example of a typical old-fashioned Southern home.

Built in 1858 by the late William C. Pratt, upon the site of another Camden, named in honor of His Lordship, Charles Pratt, Earl of Camden, it is now the property of Mrs. Eliza Pratt and family.

The old parlor, stocked with handsome old furniture of the period of its construction; its broad, breezy halls; its group of tropical trees, the scars of war evidencing the fact that it was not beyond range of the firing line, during its infancy, all give to Camden an interesting touch of pleasing individuality.

The old custom of gathering the servants together from the various quarters on Christmas Eve still continues, and a peep into the commodious hall of the "great house," on that festive evening, is indeed a rare treat. That inspiring symbol, the shining Christmas tree, proclaims its significant message from a conspicuous corner, and ebony-folk, dressed in gingham and calico, with bandanas and kerchiefs folded over capacious bosoms and waistlines, are here, and good nature, good cheer, the spirit of generosity and gratitude permeate the remotest corner.

Gifts galore abound, and perhaps an old darkey melody will be sung, or "Uncle" will play an enlivening tune on the fiddle, a reminder of "befo' de war" days at Camden.

Camden

Chapter XXV.

KINLOCK

"Upon a branch of Blackburn's Creek . . . stands Vanter's Church. . . . I still have the old Bible at Kinlock, valued for its antiquity. . . ."

—RICHARD BAYLOR, *in Bishop Meades "Old Churches."*

. . .

"A FLOWER" that seems to "waste its sweetness on the desert air" is the lovely old Virginia home whose day seems done. Distant, deserted, secluded, still, it stands in its grove of, perhaps, wild loveliness. From the depths of the luxuriant growth of weeds and saplings faint traces of the skill of the landscape gardener are yet discernible. Ovals, oblongs, squares and circles have disappeared, and only bricks and boxwood at intervals are left to express his labor.

The blossoms of the Yellow Harrison and the Maiden's Blush rose peep timidly out, their persistent efforts to live beneath the flourishing tangles of wild cucumber, chicory and ox-eye daisy are crowned with partial success.

But the loved English ivy still climbs the tall trees, and butterflies flit, and humming-birds hum in the sweet-scented clover and honeysuckle. A magnetic atmosphere still lingers around the old place, as the aroma of the sweet mignonette lingers still in the space, when its material presence is there no more.

From the viewpoint of the tourist today, the old homestead is still fulfilling a noble mission. It unfolds before him an interesting page of local history, from which, if he be discerning, he can readily read much of the environment and characteristics of its creators and contemporaries.

Such an old home is Kinlock, in Essex County, not far from the Caroline border. "Far from the gay cities and the ways of men!"

Although it has not attained the age of many of the old homes in Essex, on account of the high cost of its construction, its unusual spaciousness within and without and, above all, the recollections of its far-reaching hospitality, its name is known far and near.

Mr. Richard Baylor, a wealthy landowner, was the first master of Kinlock. He was well known in the social, religious and political life of all this section, a man of rare culture, and for many years a vestryman in old Vauter's Church.

Mr. Baylor made possible every facility for the luxurious entertainment of his family and their many guests. The mansion was built in 1845,

and no expense was spared to make the house handsome, commodious and imposing. There are twenty-one rooms, eighteen of which are furnished with fireplaces. There are four chimneys, one at each corner of the house, and four large halls. Four marble pillars support the front portico, which is reached by two flights of iron stairways. Entering the facade, here is a broad hall, sixty feet long, and from it to the second floor ascends a solid mahogany staircase. The observatory is inclosed with an iron railing, and from its height the Counties of Essex and Caroline, and across the Rappahannock, King George, Westmoreland and Richmond Counties are clearly seen.

Mrs. Virginia Showell, in her "Essex Sketches," says of Kinlock: "It would be hard to imagine life in greater ease and abundance. Every fruit and vegetable which the climate could produce were to be found in the orchard and six-acre vegetable garden . . . hogs were fattened for the kind of ham which have made Virginia internationally famous. Jersey cows furnished milk and butter in abundance, and certain colored women spent their whole time raising chickens to furnish eggs and broilers for 'the big house.' Besides these delicious home-grown products, supplies were constantly being ordered from the cities. Norfolk and Baltimore commission merchants had standing orders to be on the lookout for anything unusual and desirable for the master of Kinlock."

With such a stimulus,—epicurean patrons, and an abundant and well-ordered pantry,—no wonder that "Aunt Lucinda" and "Aunt Jane," of the Kinlock kitchen, took their merited high place in the list of famous Rappahannock cooks.

These were halcyon days for the old brick home, still in possession of members of the Baylor family.

But now the heavy shutters are closed, and doors and windows are barred, and silence—and maybe the credible ghost—hold sway where once was life and animation.

The big kitchen with its flagstone floor and mammoth fireplace is here still, but the tenor song of the cheery teakettle is a song that has

Kinlock

been. The biscuit block in the butler's pantry is doomed to rest in its secluded corner and impatiently reflects on its delicious products of other days. Spiders in the wine cellar must be content to spin their webs on rafter and wall, the receptacles with the luscious vintage of years ago are there no more.

The one-time velvet turf of the extensive grounds is dappled still by Norway spruces, chestnuts, English yews, silver and Georgia maples, and other rare trees planted nearly seventy-five years ago by an artist in landscape architecture. The sun-dial still tells its glowing tale of "sunny hours amid ye floures" and weeds. But the tale is told to empty space, save now and then an appreciative visitor looks on its face, or the barefoot boy leaves his cows in the meadow and comes to see if "dinner-time" is near.

Once in a great while shutters are opened, windows and doors are unbarred, the big key turns in its lock, God's glorious sunshine bolts in, and here are guests at Kinlock. The big house is quickened into life again. From attic rafter to cellar paving spreads the welcome news that all the world is not asleep forever.

Chapter XXVI.

BROOKE'S BANK

"My grandfather . . . was with the Governor when he first crossed the Blue Ridge, for which he received from the Executive a medal, a gold horseshoe set with garnets, and worn as a brooch, which I have seen in the possession of Edmund Brooke. . . ."

—Judge Francis Taliaferro Brooke.

. . .

THERE is a depth of beauty in the face of a battle-scarred veteran, if, through the grizzled visage, there shines, undimmed, a kindly soul, and the features radiate the fire of patriotism and courage!

Battle-scarred Brooke's Bank, Essex County, has a beauty which is analagous. Like the inn of old, it was

> "Built in the old Colonial day,
> When men lived in a grander way,
> With ampler hospitality."

Through the scars on its old brick face, inflicted by gunboats on the Rappahannock during the War Between the States, and the more serious

ones, the result of time and tenants, its soul shines through. Said to have been built about 1731, it is almost contemporaneous with old Vauter's Church, three miles away. It was the love and interest, the labor and achievements of inmates of the charming homes in this vicinity, Brooke's Bank, Blandfield, Elmwood, Fonthill, Kinlock, Fairfield, Epping Forest, Edenetta, and others, which saved this interesting relic from complete demolition, restored it to the original, and those that now remain are still keeping it alive. The old cruciform church is very interesting, with its floor of immense flagstones, its high pews with doors, its elevated pulpit, near the center, with its worn red velvet hangings!

And with what eloquence did the distinguished Reverend Robert Rose, one of its first pastors, expound the gospel to that audience of Virginia intelligence and aristocracy!

Perhaps no name in Virginia is more closely associated with such a number of great and good men as "Brooke." Brookes were known in Maryland as early as 1650, and in Virginia the name is found in even earlier records, but the first definite mention of the name in this State is that of Robert Brooke, justice in Essex County in 1692. He married Catharine Booth, and their son, Robert, was one of that picturesque group, the Knights of the Golden Horseshoe, who in August, 1716, successfully undertook that famous expedition from Williamsburg to the summit of the Blue

Ridge Mountains. What other expedition was more fraught with romance and adventure! That entertaining narrative, John Fontaine's diary, connects it inseparably with the Rappahannock River. Germanna, the home of Governor Spotiswoode, who led the perilous journey, was on the Rappahannock. They crossed and re-crossed the Rappahannock. They were entertained on the Rappahannock. They encamped upon the Rappahannock. They hunted deer, bears, wild turkeys, and other game, on the Rappahannock, and they went "a-fishing" and "a-swimming" in the Rappahannock!

At Brooke's Camp named for Robert Brooke) a "prodigious" rattlesnake was killed. Soon after

Vauter's Church

this, the "Euphrates," or Shenandoah River, was crossed, "and the Governor buried a bottle, with a paper enclosed, on which he writ that he took possession of this place, in the name and for King George the First of England. We had a good dinner, and after it, we got the men together, and loaded all their arms, and we drank the King's health in champagne, and fired a volley—the Princess's health in Burgundy, and fired a volley, and all the rest of the Royal Family in claret, and a volley. We had several sorts of liquors, viz.: Virginia red wine and white wine, Irish Usquebaugh, brandy, shrub, two sorts of rum, champagne, canary, cherry punch, water, cider, etc."

In this less heroic, but far more thirsty day, the perils of that pioneer journey would have faded into nothingness, under the spell of that anticipated Bacchic festival on the summit of Mount George!

There is a tablet in the courthouse at Tappahannock now, on which is engraved a horseshoe, symbol of this daring bit of exploration, and the motto, "Sic juvat transcendere montes," an inspiration to these gentlemen pioneers.

Above are engraved these words:

"In memory of
Robert Brooke, Gentleman, Justice
of ye old Court, 1692-1706,
and of
Robert Brooke, Jr., Deputy Clerk
of ye old Court, 1700,
and Horseshoe Knight."

Others adding lustre to the name Brooke are Dr. Lawrence Brooke, surgeon on board the Bon Homme Richard; Robert Brooke, Governor of Virginia; Roger Brooke Tancy, the celebrated chief justice; Francis T. Brooke, the eminent jurist; Colonel John Mercer Brooke, architect of the Merrimac, inventor of the Brooke gun, for many years instructor of physics at the Virginia Military Institute, and many more.

It is said that the old mansion was built by Mrs. Sarah Taliaferro Brooke, upon land granted to her by Queen Anne, in recognition of the services of her courageous husband, John Brooke, who lost his life at sea.

In addition to the commodious old dwelling house, which has long since passed from the Brooke ownership, the outbuildings, some of which remain in entirety, others only in part, are numerous.

Before the Revolution a large trading post and shipping wharf was on the plantation, and many tons of tobacco and other produce were taken direct to England. Ingenuity in those days discounted the indispensable auto-truck of today. One of the Brookes, living in Orange County, sent his tobacco to Brooke's Bank to export. He packed it in hogsheads, with an improvised axle, and mules dragged it thus to the shipping point.

For more than forty years Brooke's Bank has been in the hands of tenants, usually unapprecia-

tive. It now belongs to the estate of the late Dr. Walton Saunders. Nevertheless, its atmosphere is permeated with the sweet fragrance of worthwhile, bygone days, and in the spring narcissi, jonquils, buttercups, daffodils bloom the fairest, and do their utmost to relieve the gloom, which rests on old Brooke's Bank.

Chapter XXVII.

ELMWOOD

"John Mercer, the lawyer; James Mercer, the judge; Charles Fenton Mercer, the statesman; Theodore S. Garnett, a civil engineer; James Mercer Garnett, a teacher, and his son, James Mercer Garnett, Jr., a lawyer, represent successive generations of the family in this country. . . . A marble bust of him [Hon. Charles Fenton Mercer] is still at Elmwood, Essex County, Virginia. . . ."

—James Mercer Garnett.

. . .

AGAIN we are gliding over the smooth surface of the Tidewater Trail, still in Essex County. The soft October air brings to us a pleasing message from the farmer's field, the sweet odor of autumn tells of the returns of the spring and summer work. Great stacks of golden yellow pumpkins, apples, potatoes, and shocks of heavy corn advertise the industry and prosperity of the people of Essex County, and the red, brown, green, gold, and purple tints of the landscape make this section a delight.

But the anticipation of a visit to Elmwood is thrilling indeed, and to eliminate distance is our chief concern.

Elmwood was built by Muscoe Garnett, and was completed just before the Revolutionary War. It was ready for occupancy at that time, but the construction of the porches was probably interrupted. Hon. Muscoe Russell Hunter Garnett, great-grandson of the original builder, remodelled the old mansion in 1856-7, and it is possible the porches were not completed until that date. The estate contained originally about a thousand acres.

The main massive brick structure still stands as sturdy and staunch today as in the first years of its construction. The upper windows command a magnificent view of the hills and dales of the Rappahannock valley, and the shining waters of the river glisten through the clear atmosphere six or seven miles away.

The absence of wings customary in the architecture of the period is conspicuous, and its ample front, ornamented by a narrow portico, faces a field where various shades of wild larkspur triumphantly bloom in exclusive possession.

Elmwood was also the home of that worthy statesman, Hon. James Mercer Garnett. He was for many years a vestryman in Vauter's Church. His wife, Maria Hunter Garnett, was the sister of the brilliant Senator, Robert Mercer Taliaferro Hunter, whose home at Fonthill was not far distant. He now sleeps in the cemetery at Elmwood. "Aunt Patsy," Miss Martha Fen-

ton Hunter, well known in her day as a story-writer for children, writes to her favorite nephew, Mr. Hunter: "Your kind letter found me at Elmwood, where I came to stay a few days . . . I was wandering about those lovely paths thinking of the past, and also of the future . . ."

The atmosphere created by those whose names are inseparably linked with such characteristics as integrity, wisdom, and justice, lingers today around those "lovely paths," and the visitor at Elmwood in the far-away future, if he knows its story, will be keenly conscious of its permeating presence.

Early in the nineteenth century a school for girls was conducted at Elmwood by Mrs. Garnett

Elmwood

and daughters, and later the grandfather of Mr. Muscoe R. H. Garnett opened a school for boys. Hon. B. Johnson Barbour, a classmate of Muscoe Garnett in 1829, writes: "I need not attempt any description of Elmwood. I will only say it has suggested some of the fine old English houses to me, and for years after I lived there, when I read an English novel, Elmwood, with its fine hall, its library and parlor, its corridors, and general spaciousness, would rise before me."

But the old garden in the rear is the alluring spot at Elmwood. Though the old home has been vacant for years, through the painstaking care of tenants near-by, the careless grace and order in leaf, bud, and blossom is well maintained.

A sincerely conscientious objector is generally to be admired. But when the performance of his duty forcibly collides with one's individual pleasure, and the fulfillment of high hopes is shattered thereby, the admiration is a trifle modified.

At Elmwood, on that pretty October day, the conscientious caretaker objected most strenuously to showing visitors over the rambling old house. Entreaties availed nothing. "The madam" had instructed him thusly. And when the contents of those enchanted rooms were unfolded to interested ears, and ears only, the desire to see them was intensified. Behind those magic doors are pieces of old mahogany, the sight of which would bring joy to any diciple of Chippendale or Shera-

ton. The massive sideboard, the big table and cellaret, four-poster beds, odd tables, chairs, rare and richly bound old books, paintings, India china, glass, and many more specimens which a curator or an archaeologist would lovingly handle, are here in profusion. Through a tiny chink of the tightly closed shutter, the large hall, with its cornices and panelling, is dimly seen, and mysterious doors lead, we were told, into the library, the music room, and the master's chamber.

Alas for the perversity of human desires! Pandora's wish to peep into the forbidden jar was not so great. The picturesque ruins of the four brick columns, which supported the frame portico, long since fallen into decay, stand at the south end of the mansion, and broad gravel walks radiate therefrom and invite one's step in all directions. Here are avenues of dwarf boxwood, there are clumps of waving ferns,—some have made their bed and flourish in the scant soil which the unmolested breezes of years have deposited on the perpendicular surface of the stone foundation. Well-groomed magnolia, poplar, chestnut, oak and apple trees are there, and soft masses of grassy turf luxuriate in the intermittent shade.

Hedges of honeysuckle and sweet grapevine surround the grounds, and beyond, under a soft green carpet, with its rich pile of ivy and periwinkle, sleep the ashes of various ones whose

names are written in capital letters in the history of our State.

What brilliant sunshine has entered Elmwood, and again what darkened shadows! The highest hopes of men have here materialized, and real tragedy has often found a place.

It is now in possession of Mrs. James Mitchell, Hoboken, N. J., a granddaughter of the late Mr. M. R. H. Garnett.

Chapter XXVIII.

BLANDFIELD

"A stranger has no more to do but to inquire upon the road where any gentleman or good housekeeper lives, and there he may depend upon being received with hospitality."

—Robert Beverley.

. . .

WITHIN easy driving distance of Elmwood is another old country seat which the Rappahannock Valley and Essex County is glad to claim. This is Blandfield, the old home built in 1760 by Robert Beverley, son of Captain William Beverley, the original owner of the broad Blandfield acres. It is still owned and occupied by lineal descendants, his great-great-grandson, Mr. Robert Beverley, and family.

Blandfield is that type of home,—unusual today,—which, by reason of the long-continued occupancy of generations of the same blood and interests, cements, as no other seat can, the picturesque past with the practical present. Around it is woven an unbroken chain.

Its more numerous links are memories of a distant day when men's desire for liberty was a dominant passion. The day of the cavalier, when chivalry, with its courtesy, culture, and graceful refinement, were themes for historian and poet. The name of Beverley connects these sacred memories to the more practical links of present-day activities, and many who bear the name shine as gems in the glowing circle. One of the many important characters, conspicuous in the tales of Virginia's pioneer history, is Robert Beverley, the historian, father of the original owner of Blandfield. If inaccuracies occur in his history, they are compensated for by the wealth of worth-while facts he has unfolded. In addition to this utilitarian service, Robert Beverley was one of that renowned expedition made by the Knights of the Golden Horseshoe to the summit of the Blue Ridge, when for the first time the eyes of white men looked upon the smiling Shenandoah Valley. These representative men combined a genuine love of service and usefulness to the love of adventure and pleasure. This was the age of conviviality, and in none of the colonies were there restrictions on stimulating liquors as a promoter of good cheer, and it was deemed indispensable to and inseparable from real hospitality. In 1715, Mrs. Mary Newton Stanard tells us, the year before Governor Spottswood assembled his Knights, John Fontaine, the historian of the party, made a visit to Beverley Park, the home of

Robert Beverley, the historian. They went out to see the vineyard in the early morning, and "were very merry," as Fontaine expressed it, with the wine of his host's making.

Tradition says that behind one of the marble mantels at Blandfield there is a jewelled golden horseshoe pin, dropped there by a descendant of a Knight. If tradition did not so frequently have for its basis a most unsteady foundation, it would be worth more than the removal of those heavy mantels to peep behind, and see, and pick up the inestimable treasure!

Captain William Beverley was for twenty-nine years, 1710-1740, clerk of Essex County. In him was concentered the blood of some of the noblest of the pioneer statesmen of Virginia. His mother, the beautiful Ursula Byrd, daughter of Colonel William Byrd, of Westover, was educated in England. At an early age she was married to Robert Beverley, afterwards the Virginia historian.

Then there came the little William. While yet a baby, before the young mother had passed her seventeenth birthday, she was sleeping in the little cemetery at Jamestown. The name Ursula was transmitted to several generations of Beverley.

William Beverley married Elizabeth Bland, a member of that distinguished family, a sister of Richard Bland, the patriot. It was in compliment to his talented bride that William Beverley named his handsome estate.

Mistress Elizabeth Bland Beverley is pictured today as a "Colonial dame of masterful mind," and a writer of force. But her spelling at least has not escaped criticism. Referring to her letters to her father, a recent writer says: "There charm is no whit impaired by a variegated, not to say picturesque orthography, which the most radical 'spelling reformer' has never rivalled in his most daring aberations from the norm. Nor do these eccentricities in orthography . . . detract from our keen interest in the letters of Mistress Elizabeth Beverley, of Blandfield, Essex County."

It is thought that the original house on the Blandfield estate, where lived Captain William and Elizabeth Beverley, was nearer the river than the present mansion. It was probably on the same plan. One sees, in retrospect, a vision of the vivacious wife, and pretty young daughters, Ursula and Elizabeth, stepping with stately grace through the big rooms and halls, furnished with gems in silver and china, and inlaid mahogany, products of Hepplewhite or Chippendale. Now they are the gracious hostesses at a formal "dinner company," which probably includes some of the makers of this Commonwealth, for those beautiful country seats were the haunts and homes of those adaptable personages, on whose broad shoulders rested the responsibility of many weighty questions. But, dinner over, and the fid-

dle of the likely darkey is tuned to a minuet or a Roger de Coverley, responsibilities are cast aside, the cares of Colonial government are forgotten, and ears are open only to the inspiring sound of the vibrant music, or to a resonant voice which "calls the figures" for the "country dances." And many a word of love has been spoken, and many a faithful vow has been made, under the softened light of waxen tapers at Blandfield.

Before the middle of the eighteenth century, Mrs. Stanard tells us, Captain William Beverley, of Blandfield, sent an order to his London merchant, which included six pairs of calimanco and one pair of flowered damask shoes for his wife.

Blandfield

For each of his young daughters the same. Also three fine, thin calfskins, and two skins of white leather, to be made up at home into shoes for his children. We wonder if the rest of the wardrobe was in keeping!

Go back in imagination to that far-distant day in 1759! There stands pretty Ursula Beverley! Is her dress tabby tafeta, or is it Paduasoy? Her shoes are flowered damask gleaming white, and her wedding fan, a gem from some great London artificer.

Colonel William Fitzhugh's personality, and the broad acres of far-away Marmion, on the Potomac, have won the day, and under the corniced ceiling, and near the deep window seat in the Blandfield drawing-room, the two great families are united.

In spite of the defacement incidental to time and weather, the frequent attacks of Federal gunboats cruising on the river during the War Between the States, and the untold vandalism of Union soldiers, Blandfield is still a charming home.

The chief characteristic of a real home is the family group with their loving sympathy, their understanding and execution of all the unwritten laws of hospitality, their culture and intelligence, their high ideals and cheerful comraderie. In none of these essentials is Blandfield lacking. The crackling logs still sound from beyond the big

hearthstone, and the rosy light therefrom still illumines, with warmth and cheer, the distant corners. The trusty vegetable garden still supplies fresh dainties for family and friends. And boxwood avenues are here, and roses and snowballs lend their cheer, and narcissi and jonquils, each spring, "lift up the same dear faces."

But to those of a former generation, who knew and loved the old place in the days of its past glory, what material changes there would be today! Where is all the hand-carved panelling? And many pieces of imported mahogany are missing. Where are many of the interesting family portraits? Those indelible scars without were not there in former days! It is said that during the War Between the States fifteen wagon-loads of handsome furniture, including family portraits, were carted away from Blandfield to equip the homes of unappreciative and undeserving persons.

The present owner, Mr. Robert Beverley, though an advocate for every forward movement, holds to many of the elemental principles of his illustrious ancestors, and is a familiar figure at the Diocesan Councils of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Chapter XXIX.

TAPPAHANNOCK

"This is a small village, with only a few Stores and Shops; it is on a beautiful River, and has, I am told, six, eight and ten Ships loading before it."

—PHILIP FITHIAN.

. . .

FROM Blandfield, a ten-mile stretch of pretty country road leads to an interesting little village whose name has known several changes. Before 1680 it was New Plymouth. In the time of Philip Fithian, the young New Jersey tutor at the home of Colonel Carter, at Nomini Hall, in Westmoreland County, Virginia, it was Hobbe's Hole. Since that day it has borne the more euphonious Indian name, Tappahannock, a variant of Rappahannock.

Let us turn backward the hand of time one hundred and fifty years, and accept, with Fithian, Captain Dobby's invitation to dine, that far-away July day, on the stately ship "Beaufort."

After a day of "dissipation and pleasure" a grand climax to the festivities was reached at a ball in the evening at Hobbe's Hole.

Fithian has left us, in his journal, an unaffected and unbiased exposition of social life and customs in the aristocratic Northern Neck of Virginia in 1774.

The young prospective Presbyterian divine, and his pupil, Ben Carter, rode horseback to the ferry, stopping at Colonel Tayloe's, en route, where they were joined by the Colonel, his lady, and the Misses Polly, Kitty and Sally Tayloe, all riding in the Mt. Airy "Great Coach."

Through the pleasant fields of flax, and through the rows of waving corn, whose stately stalks are justly proud of ears, both "high and large," the four miles to the ferry are quickly passed, and the bank of the Rappahannock is reached. Captain Dobby, in the Beaufort, is to meet them here.

But alas! Captain Dobby has not yet appeared. To those who know the varying moods of the Rappahannock, this contingency should have been anticipated. But with "truly womanish impatience," Mistress Tayloe exclaims, "Indeed Captain Dobby has forgot us; here we have been waiting for a full half-hour. Shall we take the ferry-boat, Colonel, and cross over and not stand any longer in the burning heat?"

Before Colonel John had time to finally settle the question the long boat came, well furnished with every equipment for comfort, and the captain received his guests "with every possible token of welcome."

After a dinner, "elegant indeed and exceedingly agreeable," the boat race was the next feature. "Captain Dobby and Captain Benson steered. . . . It was Ebb-Tide. . . . Capt. Benson won the first race. . . . The Betts were small, and chiefly given to the negroes who rowed. . . ." In the evening the "Ball" took place in a "long room, airy and cool," at which twenty-five ladies and forty gentlemen participated. Maybe the ball was held at the home of Archibald Ritchie, a wealthy merchant, and father of the noted editor, Thomas Ritchie, for he seemed director-general, appointing "a sturdy two-fisted Gentleman to open the Ball with Mrs. Tayloe. He danced midling though." There is enough evidence to doubt the latter slur, as Philip himself, though too strict a Presbyterian to engage in such frivolities, seemed to develop a touch of spleen when considering such activities. He wished that dancing had been a part of his education. He considers the art as both "innocent and ornamental," and, in the Colony of Virginia, "a necessary qualification for a person to appear even decent in company"! Perhaps the "two-fisted gentleman" danced well. Minuets and "country dances" were many, to the enlivening strains of two fiddles. Fithian, in his own inimitable language, critically describes the dress and manners of many of the young ladies present, of whom none can equal Aphia Fauntleroy, of Richmond County, "the best dancer,—and the

finest Girl. Her head, tho', was powdered white as snow and craped in the newest taste—the copy of the Goddess of Modesty—very handsome. . . ." The trio of Ritchie girls, and the same number of Tayloes, Dolly Edmund-

At Tappahannock

son, Miss Ball, Miss Ford, Miss Wade, Miss Brokenberry (Brockenbrough),—some of them names familiar in this section today,—all have their allotment of adverse or favorable criticism.

But Hobbe's Hole, the boat races, the big ball, and pretty Aphia Fauntleroy, of pre-Revolution days, are there no more. But neither time nor any other condition can take from us our rightful inheritance of those picturesque times,—an interesting retrospect, formed from fragments, stimulated by an imagination whetted with the knowledge that the blood which animates the being of many of us today is the same blood which surged in the veins of those men and women of the Rappahannock country.

Visit the quaint little town of Tappahannock today, so pleasantly situated on the south bank of the river, and one is satisfied that there are advantages in present-day living, if Fithian spoke truly. No days are spent now in "constant violent exercise, and drinking an unusual quantity of liquor." No girls go home from the ball "with a pretty handsome chap . . . in close hugg, too." Nor does "great wealth" today "give countenance to tyranny," as in the "scurvy times" of good Archibald Ritchie!

But the young pedagogue is home-sick, and sighs for his New Jersey "Laura." An entry on one of the pages of his fascinating diary reads: "Strong and sweet are the bands which tye us to

our place of nativity." The one advantage of life in the Old Dominion is that mosquitoes are not so "thick" as at Cohansie.

In point of years, Tappahannock outreaches Richmond, Williamsburg, and many other of the old towns in the State, as is shown by old records dating back previous to 1656. These records are wonderfully well preserved, and are written with a quill, with much shading and many flourishes. When reading them one believes that "a true history of tobacco would be the history of English and American liberty." (This writer neglects to emphasize the fact, in this connection, that "rum" seemed to play a prominent part.)

One old record reads: "It having pleased Almighty God to bless His Royal Majesty with the birth of a son . . . this court have ordered that Captain George Taylor do provide and bring to the North Side Court House for this county [then Rappahannock] as much rum or strong liquor with sugar proportionable as shall amount to six thousand five hundred pounds of tobacco, to be distributed among the troops . . . and other persons that shall be present at the said solemnitie . . . and bring to the South Side Court House of this county as much rum or other strong liquor with sugar proportionable as shall amount to thirty-five hundred pounds of tobacco, to be distributed as above. . . ." The courthouse, one of the finest in

the State, is delightfully reminiscent with its old portraits of noted Essex men, some of them in the quaint dress of Revolutionary times. Other portraits noted are Governor George W. Smith, U. S. Senator R. M. T. Hunter, Hon. M. R. H. Garnett, Judge Thomas Croxton, Captain William Latane Brooke, Captain Austin Brockenbrough, and many others. Mural tablets also add their interest.

Among the old buildings, which could tell an interesting story of past days, three are outstanding.

The "debtor's jail" in the courthouse square has been renovated, and its many years is never guessed. It now serves as law offices.

Under the spreading branches of elm, oak, and Norway poplars, is the still beautiful old home, said to have been built in 1690, owned and occupied for years by Mrs. B. B. Brockenbrough.

The old Ritchie home stands not far from the courthouse.

Chapter XXX.

MT. AIRY

"Here is an elegant Seat! . . . From this House there is a good prospect of the River Rapahannock, which, opposite here, is about two miles across;"

—Philip Fithian.

. . .

CROSSING the broad reaches of water at Tappahannock, on the comfortable and commodious ferry-boat, one is treading the soil of Richmond County.

Essex, Richmond, Caroline, King George, Stafford, Westmoreland, Lancaster, Middlesex! What reminders of English kings and dukes, and baronial days and ways, are the names of Virginia's counties washed by that tidal current, the Rappahannock!

Essex and Richmond Counties, on opposite sides of the river, were formed in 1692 from old Rappahannock County, that extensive tract of land, lying on both sides of the river, which ceased its existence that year.

Now we are within that area which includes some of those magnificent estates which have been handed down through each successive generation with all the classic features of true English Colonial architecture, with all the beauty and charming interest of its ancestral furnishings, and with a wealth of well-substantiated facts of history and romance, expressed within its walls.

Mt. Airy is the first one reached. This magnificent mansion, about three miles north of the village of Warsaw, suggests Old World homes in olden days. It was built in 1747 by Colonel John Tayloe, and from that distant day to the present it has never passed from the male line of descent, being now the property of Mr. W. H. Tayloe, of Washington, D. C. The traditional hospitality of Mt. Airy folk is graciously sustained today by his sisters, the Misses Tayloe.

Perhaps no home in the State is more suggestive of baronial times in the mother country at the period of its construction.

Frank C. Baldwin, writing in the "Journal of American Institute of Architects," says: "It gives one the impression of having been picked up in its entirety, from an old English wooded park, and boldly transplanted to an American forest of oaks, carefully chosen for the similarity which it bore to the original home setting."

The manor house consists of a main central building, connected by curved galleries to com-

modious wings on either side. The symetrical semi-circle thus formed incloses the spacious forecourt. The building is a warm brown stone quarried on the place, with trimmings of rich gray sandstone brought from the neighborhood of Aquia Creek. The heavy stone dogs surmounting the bases on either side of the front entrance add a certain element of impressiveness from the viewpoint of many persons, even though they are criticized by others as not being in complete harmony with the other classic features.

The flower gardens and banks of shrubbery are massed on the river side, and beyond their luxuriant coloring, beyond the atmosphere, sweet-scented with lavender, balsam, mignonette, cedar and boxwood; beyond the gravel paths, and the park where the graceful deer used to bound, and

Mount Airy

beyond the several miles of verdant woodland, the waters of the Rappahannock, in distant perspective, shimmer like a silver path.

The portraits at Mt. Airy are of more than usual interest, representing as they do men and women of worth and excellence, and all closely related to the past and present occupants of the ancestral home.

Governors George Plater, Benjamin Ogle, and Samuel Ogle, of Maryland, are there, and the names Tayloe, Page, Wormley, Corbin, and Carter are numerous.

The originals of these paintings were important personages, but the shadows created by their brilliancy are not deep enough to obscure another set of pictures at Mt. Airy. To the lover of good, clean sport, these are most appealing, for dotting the library walls, at intervals, are many engravings of aristocrats in English race horses, and of those from the Mt. Airy stables of yesterday. Yorick is here, of course,—Yorick who won a prize of five hundred pounds in November, 1773,—and Grey Diomede and Belair.

Chapter XXXI.

SABINE HALL

"Does Sabine Hall owe its name to the classical Landon Carter's interest in the squaws carried off by the Moraughticunds, like the Sabine women of antiquity?"

—Moncure D. Conway.

. . .

IN close proximity to Mt. Airy is another ancestral home, also permeated with the ever-captivating breath of bygone days, and steeped in that indefinable magnetism which close association with generations of the same line of lineage alone can effect.

This is Sabine Hall, where the musical laughter of children of the eighth generation today blends in happy harmony with the well-executed conceptions of "King" Carter, who built the splendid brick mansion for his youngest son, Colonel Landon Carter, in 1730.

On the right, as you enter the Sabine Hall estate, is a charming little lodge embowered in trees and vines. Until recently "Aunt Lucindy," a picturesque "antique," would emerge therefrom, and

close the gates for you. With her old-fashioned gentility and courtliness, her obliging deference for "de white folks," her flowered bandana, and her whole environment, the visitor lived for a moment in another day.

Stepping into the panelled hall from the classic portico, one's attention is immediately directed to the interesting portrait of the father of the race of Virginia Carters. This is Robert Carter, of Corotoman, that storied planter, King Carter, who had his residence on Corotoman Creek. All traces of his marvelous seat have disappared many, many years since, but this busy little arm of the Rappahannock is today singing its same cheerful song, as it winds its way through the land of descendants of King Carter and of his compatriots.

The rare old portraits of other Carters at Sabine Hall, Colonl Landon and his three successive brides, and the Byrds, the Harrisons, the Wormleys, all seem to smile their approval of present-day conditions, as they proudly rest upon the beautiful hand-carved panels.

Is there a country-seat in all Virginia possessing the wealth of interesting heirlooms in portraits, books, mahogany and silver? And the stories of Sabine Hall, with Colonel Carter and his distinguishd guests, make a winning sequence in Virginia history.

But the charm of the interior, with its many reminders of cavalier days, blended with such

congruity with the indispensables of today, meets its equal in th out-of-doors at Sabine Hall. Here the formal flower beds still retain their pristine shape and old-time favorites,—many of them descendants of those planted in the long-ago past,—still enchant the passer-by. Here on the velvet terrace is the odorous boxwood hedge, the dull green of that loved old shrub an effective background for glowing crepe myrtle, peonies, mock orange, snowballs, hollyhocks, bridal wreath, and majestic white yuccas.

And over there, in season, is the heavenly blue of the tall delphiniums, the glowing scarlet of the pyrus japonica, the rosy hues of the flowering almond and weigelia blossoms, and the brilliant and unyielding geraniums, all toned and softened

Sabine Hall

by close proximity to the clinging ivy, wistaria, and climbing roses.

Down a grassy ramp an aged but vigorous hickory tree lifts its leafy limbs to heaven, and,

"In the days of old, when the spring with cold
Had brightened his branches gray,
Through the grass at his feet crept maidens sweet,
To gather the dew of May,
And on that day to the rebeck gay
They frolicked with lonesome swains;
They are gone. . . . But the tree, it still remains."

Beyond its dappled shade, beyond those slopes thick-set with myriads of narcissi, beyond the groves of oak and hemlock, of lilacs and althea, and beyond the orchards and the vegetable gardens, the waters of the Rappahannock glisten in the distance.

Sabine Hall is today the home of Mrs. R. Carter Wellford and family.

Belleville

A peep into Belleville, that substantial old brick mansion near-by, is well worth a short detour, and a stop as long as conditions permit. It is the past and present home of the Brockenbroughs, a name which, since early days, has been associated with every movement for betterment in this section. The house itself, the magnificent trees,

and the attractive grounds and flower beds, tell of the loving care and upkeep, which is still the lot of Belleville.

Before leaving Richmond County we must visit that once-active little Rappahannock wharf with the clumsy name of Naylor's Hole. Surely there is nothing material here today which would warrant more than a passing glance. But Naylor's Hole has had an interesting day. An old brick mansion, an ancient landmark, in close proximity, disappeared only a few years ago. This was the home of Moore Fauntleroy, the progenitor of that ambitious name in this country, and later of his son, William, and of "Betsy," the reputed belle and beauty,—the most eligible candidate for the undecided distinction of "Washington's Lowland beauty," a campaign still conducted by students of history.

Moncure Conway says the present house on the same site is plebeian enough to make the great cavalier, Moore Fauntleroy, turn over in his grave,—so elegant was his mansion. Mr. Conway tells us there were many aboriginal "lords of the land" in this locality, and that Moore Fauntleroy led in the work of their extermination. Now the democratic grass waves alike over the site of the picturesque wigwam and the great palace of the pale face.

In Westmoreland County

Chapter XXXII.

WESTMORELAND COUNTY

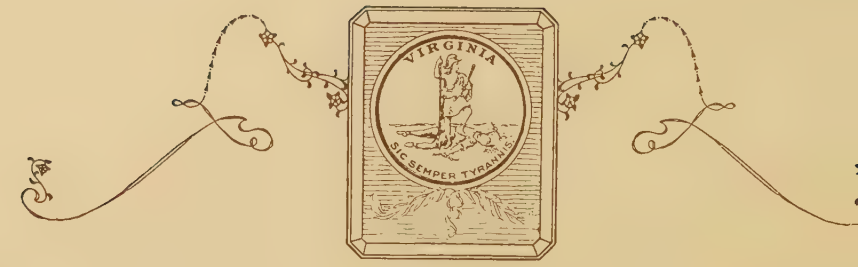
"But, my friends, as the traveller passes through this Virginia Westmoreland, the forms of the great men who have sprung from its soil, rise before him."

—Randolph Harrison McKim, D. D.

. . .

WE pass now into the spot whose hills and dales and rocks and rills, and air and sky together, formed that powerful agent which must have contributed its material force to other conditions and given birth to that group of men whose achievements justify old Westmoreland as "The Cradle of American Liberty."

The Potomac bathes its northern boundary, and the dominant note of its cheerful song is pardonable pride in its history, its romances and its traditions, while the Rappahannock flows on the south, absorbed in its own worthy story.



Chapter XXXIII.

LEEDSTOWN

"Few people realize that the little settlement in Westmoreland County, on the banks of the Rappahannock River, . . . is one of the historic places in the country. . . . That to this port came the polished furniture, the beautiful china, the massive silver, and the elegant dresses that adorned . . . the persons of those great Westmoreland families; . . . that here shiploads of tobacco, and other products of the soil, were loaded for foreign countries. . . ."

—JUDGE T. R. B. WRIGHT.

. . .

TRUE, the Rappahannock, in all its circuitous windings, cannot boast a Wakefield or a Stratford, but as long as the story of the American Revolution is told, the name of the now quiet little river wharf will be remembered. Though its historic past finds no visible expression today, neither the lapse of years nor any other condition can take away from Leedstown its treasured memories, its sapphire skies, its far-smiling lands, and the peace which encircles its silent hills.

Look from the little village of today, through the long vista of years, and through the haze

there will arise the Leedstown whose birth in 1683 was contemporaneous with that of the great Quaker City in Pennsylvania.

More than half a century elapses since that ancient day, and here are the commodious and comfortable dwellings of the colonists, equipped with large yards and rare exotics.

Over there towards the setting sun the little "Leeds Church" lifts its spire heavenward. Not far away the big Colonial tavern, built of sturdy beams from the primeval forest, stands with its hospitable doors wide open to receive the great men of the colony. Its solid foundation and its monstrous chimneys evince the quality of American brick.

From dormer windows on the second floor its guests may see the tortuous windings of the placid river, with tobacco-laden packets headed straight for Liverpool. Reflectd in its shady depths are still scattered traces of the Rappahannock Indians and their allies, the Nanzaticoes.

But something more than usual is astir in the big room downstairs. Rich coaches, and uncomfortable chaises, and sulkies, are conspicuous in the stable yards, and not a vacant ring can be found in all that long line of hitching-posts.

A peep through the heavily leaded diamond window panes discloses the three-cornered hats, queues, wigs and riding dress of scores of patriots, and the voices of the Lees, the Washing-

tons, Brockenbroughs, Lewises, Monroes, Balls, Campbells, Seldens, Masons, and others, are heard in excited exhortation. English tyranny and taxation seem the all-important theme. This is the memorable twenty-seventh day of February, 1766, and one hundred and fifteen patriots are here assembled, under the leadership of Richard Henry Lee.

Listen! they are binding themselves to each other, to God, and to their country, that at every hazard, and paying no regard to danger or to death, they will exert every faculty to prevent the execution of the Stamp Act.

That protest subscribed to by such men, ten years before the Declaration of Independence, will always hold a prominent place in American history data.

Rudely awakened by the sentient voice of the innerman, declaring time for lunch, we descend from the heights of sentiment and old-time memories, from patriots with wigs and three-cornered hats, from taverns with dormer windows, and from coaches and chaises to the touring car of today, and the exigencies of existence.

A step on the running board makes accessible a tempting box of lunch, and in the consummation of ham sandwiches, made from patent roller process flour, and steaming hot coffee from the luminous thermos bottle, we reflect that life is

sweet, even if it be the less picturesque version of a century and a half ago.

But the shadows begin ot fall eastward, and we are reminded that we cannot linger here if we are to have a peep into Menokin, in Richmond County, and Epping Forest, in Lancaster, before the shadows of evening fall too thick and fast.

Chapter XXXIV.

MENOKIN

". . . In the meantime, let me again entreat you to fall upon some method of deverting yourself, either by going abroad, or inviting others to join you at Menokin, or both. . . . I am, my dearest Becky,

"Your affectionate . . ."

—Francis Lightfoot Lee.

. . .

THE other historic acres of Westmoreland are quickly passed, and Richmond County is here once more.

A few short miles above Warsaw, a turn to the right on the King's Highway, leads to a gleaming white structure, which, seen from a distance, seems an enchanted castle crowning the summit of this elevation. On nearer approach one finds that distance lends its magic charm, and this once beautiful mansion, Menokin, the old home of Colonel Francis Lightfoot Lee, is in a sad state of repair. The white stucco which covers the heavy structure has in many places loosened from its hold and disappeared, and the narrow porticoes

which must have equipped the back and front have crumbled away, but the quoins and trimmings of brown sandstone are yet intact. The picturesque "office" of heavy stone blocks is an interesting study in period architecture, the worn stone steps speak the silent language of days gone by, and the carved and panelled mantels and cornices try to tell of luckier times, through a dingy coat of homely paint.

But go to the head of the stone steps in the rear, and you look down upon a sylvan scene. Nature, in a generous mood, has covered that sloping hillside with some of her most graceful gifts, and the natural tangles of greens, and climbing untrained roses,—some of them bloom in the topmost branches of the tall cedars,—is a bewitching sight.

The solidity of the structural part of the old building, its abounding space and symmetrical proportions, its past grandeur and stateliness still visibly expressed, all seem to typify the character of the great man, who selected the location, and built thereon the beautiful home which sheltered himself and his chosen bride, Rebecca, the second daughter of Colonel John and Rebecca Plater Tayloe, of Mt. Airy.

How dearly Colonel Lee loved his life at Menokin, and the agricultural pursuits its acres afforded! Was the significance of the Indian word, Menokin, *good, growing place,* responsible

for the euphonious name? A legend is still current in Richmond County as to the origin of its nomenclature. A solitary Indian in the very early days stood disconsolately on the brow of that hill, and, with his arms akimbo, muttered, in his newly acquired language, "Me no kin."

Though little light is shed today on life at old Menokin, one seems to see through misty shadows the wisdom of Providence in taking the spirits of this devoted and childless couple within one short week. They both passed away in January, 1797, and sleep today in Mt. Airy burying-ground.

The charming old couple, Mr. and Mrs. Belfield, who are today keeping the place alive, are examples of Virginia hospitality.

Chapter XXXV.

EPPING FOREST

". . . But now we come
To do thee homage, mother of our chief!
. . . . . .
Methinks we see thee as in olden time,
Simple in garb, majestic and serene,
Unawed by pomp and circumstance; in truth
Inflexible, and with a Spartan zeal
Repressing vice, and making folly grave."

—Lydia Huntley Sigourney.

. . .

THAT an entrancing link of the highway leads from Warsaw to Lancaster County! Over a smooth dirt road, with its succession of hills and valleys, bordered by cedar, walnut, blossoming catalpa trees, and the unmolested growth of hanging vines, one travels all too quickly.

Those sparkling gems at intervals along the route serve not only to deck the already pleasing landscape, but the utilitarian purpose of their being is obvious. Not far away the old mill stands, and the big wheel,—sometimes busy, is turned by the water from the lake-like pond. Re-

flected in its shadowed depths is the blue of heaven. The pure white of elder blossoms, the sweet-scented grapevine and honeysuckle, and the faintly odorous eglantine, embrace, in an irregular circle, its dappled surface. Pantico and Totuskey Creeks, which soon are lost in Rappahannock waters, are crossed, and the pretty little villages of Emmerton and Farnham are part of the itinerary.

Presently our informant, the kindly guide-post, tells in no uncertain terms that here is Ball's Mill. With what a thrill does one realize that he is nearing the spot where, on that long-ago November day, Colonel Joseph Ball's little blue-eyed Mary, the future mother of Washington, was born!

Leaving the highway at Nuttsville, and finding this lateral road, also, an excellent thoroughfare, we drive a mile or two. From the mill-pond to the stop at the present Epping Forest, one lives absorbed in the early days of the eighteenth century. But on arrival the dream has an abrupt awakening. The transition is all too sudden. Where are the evidences of two centuries past? Where are the dormer windows, the crumbling brick walls hung with ivy, the moss-covered well bucket, the dove-cotes and the chaotic tangles of undergrowth? All are inseparably linked in our mental vision with the girlhood days of Mary Ball.

The well-appointed and thoroughly modern frame dwelling of today is painted a creamy tint. Some of its architectural features are Colonial. It is entirely in keeping with the well-groomed grounds, from which, at close intervals, spring many varieties of beautiful shade trees. Many of the cedars, oaks, and sycamores have attained a ripe old age. The young apple orchard looks hale and hearty, and waving fields of grain in the distance mingle with the blue of the horizon. Beyond is that sacred spot where, it is believed, the parents of Mary Ball are resting.

But exploration reveals some charming relics in the rear, and the spell of Mary Ball's day enthralls one again. On entering the old cook-house on the left, near the big gate which sepa-

Coach House

rates the barnyard buildings, one dreams again of the days of 1708. Here is the massive brick fireplace, eight or ten feet wide. On the right the bricks are crumbling away, and its many years are plainly manifest. Members of the family, many generations removed from Mary Ball, are lovingly guarding this sacred memorial, and the old coachhouse similar within the stable-yard.

Ball descendants still occupy the ancestral acres. The place is now owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. James D. Jessee, the latter a granddaughter of Dr. Thomas Ball.

The last disastrous fire occurred about two years ago, when the house was rebuilt on the same site. In a section of the attic is disclosed the enormous hand-wrought timbers of the early days, used again in the construction of the new house, beams which defy the ravages of time, weather, and conflagration. Some of the old furniture with which the house is equipped has descended through several generations of Balls.

The Balls were conspicuous as worthy citizens in medieval England, among her landed gentry, and as Virginia cavaliers they were not found wanting. One ancestor of Mary Ball, in 1480, bore the imposing title of "William Ball, Lord of the Manor of Barkham." But be they "Lord" or "Gentleman," they proved themselves worthy to bear upon their escutcheon, a most honorable emblem of heraldry,—a lion rampant, holding

aloft a globe. The motto, *Coelumque Tueri, looking steadfastly to Heaven,* may have inspired that great American descendant, the son of Mary Ball.

Now we are near Belle Isle, that once ancestral home built in 1750 by Raleigh William Downman for his son, Raleigh, Jr. But because of lack of time, and the knowledge that much of interest which formerly attached to the stout old brick mansion, is there no more, its appeal is resisted.

With many regrets at only a glimpse into Lancaster Courthouse, old White Chapel Churchyard, and interesting old Christ Church, we leave the neighborhood so fraught with historic lore.

Chapter XXXVI.

ROSEGILL

"Rosegill, where the Wormeleys lived in English state, has passed from hand to hand, and is reduced to less than half its size."

—Bishop Meade.

. . .

AND now another old home, across the wide waters, is beckoning, and its reputed charm is too enticing to resist. This is Rosegill, in Middlesex County, built shortly after the middle of the seventeenth century by Colonel Ralph Wormeley, Secretary of the Colony of Virginia.

Crossing the broad river by way of Tappahannock Ferry, and again traversing many miles of the scenic Tidewater Trail, the little village of Urbanna is reached. Winterbotham says in his history of America, 1796, that Urbanna "has all the appearance of a deserted village." Today it has all the appearance of a village, but the air of desertion is not there, and, with its extended and beautiful water front, its splendid commercial fa-

Rosegill

cilities, and other pronounced assets, it may yet, though the hour is late, blossom into a metropolis.

The often-repeated beauty of Rosegill raises one's expectations beyond the usual level. But once on that commanding bluff, with the broad Rappahannock spread out before, with every item of the handsome grounds in pleasing symmetry, and with the message of the past of two centuries and a half still conveyed in the lines and the atmosphere of the charming old home, there is no trace of disappointment.

The vast possessions included in Rosegill, in the freshness of its youth, are graphically described in that delightful little sketch of life in Virginia in 1686, written by a Frenchman (lately translated and annotated by Mr. Fairfax Harrison), who says: "He [Mr. Wormeley] has, too, at least twenty houses scattered along a charming plateau above the Rappahannock River. The best of these he had lent to the Governor [Sir Henry Chicheley, Deputy Governor]. Arriving thither, I might have believed myself to be entering a good-sized town, and I learned later that all of it belonged to Mr. Wormeley."

Owing to its many years, and the many changes in ownership, and consequent careless upkeep, Rosegill had fallen into a sad state of dilapidation, when, in 1901, the late State Senator, J. H. Cochran, of Pennsylvania, purchased it for a home, restored the old house, as far as possible,

to the original lines, and embellished the grounds with many rare trees, and much blossoming shrubbery. The house was originally of red brick, but in recent years a coat of stucco has been applied as far as the second floor.

A broad hall runs the entire length of the house on the river side. From the numerous windows therein, and from the broad dormer windows of the second story, the view of the landscape will not be soon forgotten. In the distance is spread the far-reaching waters, and the green of the grounds in the foreground, with avenues of beeches and poplars, and masses of roses and lilacs and iris, bordering the broad gravel paths, is indeed a joy. One of these paths leads from the mansion to the river's brink, where, embowered in fragrant vines, is the inviting summer house, and where sweet peas in luxuriant masses blossom on the bank.

So well was Rosegill equipped to dispense Mr. Cochran's generous hospitality that he has entertained as many as forty friends at a time, it is said.

The yet broad estate of nearly seven hundred acres has recently passed into the ownership of Mr. and Mrs. Norwood Browning Smith, who plan other extensive improvements, and will plant many acres in cotton.

The old T-shaped red brick house, Hewick, the seventeenth-century home of Christopher Robin-

not far away. He was a brother of John, Bishop of London, and was an important man in the colonies. He was one of the trustees of William and Mary College, and his influence and interest led him into many active fields of service.

Although its corner bricks reveal 16—, the structural part of the building is wonderfully preserved. It is owned by Mrs. Thomas G. Jones and tenanted.

One hopes that the near future holds in store another visit to these identical spots, and to others so regretfully passed, whose charm is also most alluring.

And the material current of the old Rappahannock hastens on, past the pretty little village of Irvington, past the wharves, Millenbeck, Weems, Bertrand and White Stone, past old Christ Church, with its ancient epitaphs in close proximity.

But the big heart of the river abides there still, and through its long length it overflows with fragrant memories of a picturesque and significant past, and definite messages from worthy grandsires are sent from yet existent homes on its banks,—homes whose gardens still breathe the breath of aromatic boxwood, the spicy redolence of old-time favorites, and of the friendly and tenacious English ivy and clematis.

Fulfilling its meritorious mission, the identity of its waters is absorbed in the capacious and hospitable bosom of Chesapeake Bay.

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